



FFA

NEW HORIZONS

FFAnewhorizons.org

Spring 2016

PLUS:

OH SNAP!

TOP TIPS FOR

SAFER SELFIES

A Class Above

Five reasons to become an agriculture teacher

FAST TALKING MAN

Kansas FFA alumnus wins world auctioneering championship

GRAB THE BEST TEES

WHILE THEY LAST!

NOW 25% OFF

USE COUPON CODE: 16LG25. SHOP SELECT STYLES AT ShopFFA.org THROUGH APR. 30, 2016.



FRONT

2015-2016 ANNUAL TEE
TEE15 (S-5X) ~~\$12.50~~ **\$9.38**



BACK

2015-2016 ANNUAL TEE
TEE15 (S-5X) ~~\$12.50~~ **\$9.38**



WE ARE FFA EMBLEM LOGO TEE
01608 (S-2X) ~~\$15.50~~ **\$11.63**



DON'T GO BACON MY TEE
01396 (S-2X) ~~\$15.50~~ **\$11.63**



FFA-EMBLEM LOGO TEE
00785-42 (S-5X) ~~\$12.50~~ **\$9.38**



I BELIEVE CREED TEE
01567 (S-5X) ~~\$17.50~~ **\$13.13**



BELIEVE CREED TEE
01566 (S-2X) ~~\$19.50~~ **\$14.63**



EMBLEM XTREME-TEK TEE
01512 (S-2X) ~~\$19.50~~ **\$14.63**



BACK

Select styles while supplies last. Cannot be redeemed on previous orders. Offer is valid through Apr. 30, 2016.

ShopFFA.org | 888 332 2668



SPRING 2016

FFA NEW HORIZONS™

20



12

FEATURES

8 Gimme' Five

Norco, Calif., FFA challenges seniors to make their community better with \$5.

12 Fast Talking Man

Kansas FFA alumnus is a world-champion auctioneer.

18 'Tis So Sweet

Versailles FFA members get a taste of food science careers by developing new ice cream flavors.

20 Keeping the Farm

Young Texan helps farm families with future plans.

ON THE COVER

Blaine Lotz, an FFA alumnus from Edna, Kan., won the 2014 World Livestock Auctioneer Championship at the age of 20.

PHOTO BY FRANK ORDOÑEZ

DEPARTMENTS

3 What's Online

Enter our photo contest for your chance to win.

4 Scrapbook

Celebrate FFA achievements and good deeds.

6 FFA Faces

Meet members from across the country.

16 Ag 101

Learn about meat goats, the primary protein source for many countries.

24 National Officer Q&A

Find out how the 2015-16 officers describe their teammates.

26 Premier Leadership

See how one FFA chapter spreads diversity awareness through a simple photo.

28 Personal Growth

Brush up on selfie etiquette before you post.

30 Career Success

Consider a career in agricultural education.

32 Living to Serve

Learn how an Alabama FFA alumna shines light on breast cancer with her pink tractor.



18

READ FFA NEW HORIZONS ON YOUR TABLET AND PHONE

iPad • iPhone • Kindle Fire • Android Device

VIDEOS, PHOTOS,

INTERACTIVE FEATURES

AND MORE



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: FFAnewhorizons.org/mobile

Editor **KIM NEWSOM HOLMBERG**
Associate Editor **JESSY YANCEY**
FFA Communications Manager **JULIE WOODARD**
Content and Marketing Team **RACHEL BERTONE, M.A. ORR, BRITTANY STOVALL, HANNAH PATTERSON**
V.P. Creative Services **CHRISTINA CARDEN**
Art Director **LAURA GALLAGHER**
Graphic Design **SAMANTHA FRAZIER, HEATHER HAUSER, SUSANNA HAYNES, AMY HIEMSTRA, LINDSEY HIGGINS, KRIS SEXTON, VIKKI WILLIAMS**
Color Imaging Technician **ALISON HUNTER**
Photo Editor **MICHAEL BETTS**
Photography Director **JEFFREY S. OTTO**
Photography Team **JEFF ADKINS, FRANK ORDOÑEZ, MICHAEL TEDESCO**
Digital Operations **ALLISON DAVIS**
Digital Products **ERICA LAMPLEY**
Web Designer II **RICHARD STEVENS**
Software Engineer **DYLAN UNDERWOOD**
Ad Production Manager **KATIE MIDDENDORF**
Ad Traffic Assistant **PATRICIA MOISAN**
Accounting **DIANA IAFRATE, MARIA MCFARLAND, LISA OWENS**
State FFA Inserts **KRISTY GILES**
Controller **CHRIS DUDLEY**
Advertising Sales **RHONDA GRAHAM**

For advertising information, contact Rhonda Graham, (800) 333-8842, ext. 324, or email rgraham@jnlfcom.com.

2015-16 National FFA Officers

President **TAYLOR MCNEEL, AR**
Secretary **NICK BAKER, TN**
Central Region Vice President **ABRAH MEYER, IA**
Eastern Region Vice President **SYDNEY SNIDER, OH**
Southern Region Vice President **ABBEY GRETSCH, GA**
Western Region Vice President **SARAH DRAPER, UT**

National FFA Staff

Chief Executive Officer **DWIGHT ARMSTRONG**
Chief Operating Officer **JOSHUA BLEDSOE**
Chief Financial Officer **DAVID SCHAPKER**
President, National FFA Foundation **MOLLY BALL**

National FFA Board of Directors

Chair, National FFA Advisor, VA **STEVE BROWN**
National FFA Executive Secretary **SHERENE DONALDSON**
Treasurer, NJ **NANCY TRIVETTE**
State Supervisor, AL **JACOB DAVIS**
State Supervisor, UT **WILLIAM (BUDDY) DEIMLER**
State Supervisor, WV **JASON HUGHES**
State Supervisor, CO **MIKE WOMOCHIL**
Teacher/USDE, CT **BILL DAVENPORT**
Industry Representative/USDE, KS **RUTH KIMMELSHUE**
Teacher Educator/USDE, TX **JONATHAN ULMER**
State FFA Executive Secretary/USDE, UT **BRETT EVANS**

Subscription Information:
FFA New Horizons (ISSN 1069-806X) is published quarterly by the National FFA Organization, 6060 FFA Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960. Publisher assumes no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts, art or any other unsolicited materials. For subscription information contact: FFA New Horizons Subscription Services, (317) 802-4235 or email newhorizons@FFA.org. Periodical postage rate is paid at Indianapolis, Ind., and additional mail offices.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to FFA New Horizons, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960.



Copyright ©2016 by the National FFA Organization and Journal Communications Inc.

FFA MISSION
FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MISSION
Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resource systems.

The National FFA Organization affirms its belief in the value of all human beings and seeks diversity in its membership, leadership and staff as an equal opportunity employer.

The National FFA Organization is a resource and support organization that does not select, control, or supervise state association, local chapter or individual member activities. Educational materials are developed by FFA in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education as a service to state and local agricultural education agencies.

FFAnewhorizons.org

Visit *FFA New Horizons* online to read more great stories, learn about agriculture and download our FREE app!



SHOW US YOUR BEST LIVESTOCK PHOTOS

Do you show livestock? If so, we want to see your best photos! Go online to FFAnewhorizons.org/photo-contest to enter your best snapshots – from the barn, the showing, or even the wash rack.

Our photo contest sponsor, Show Edge, will award great prizes for the best images.



DIGITAL MAGAZINE

Want to see past issues of *FFA New Horizons*? Visit the Digital Magazine page to flip through past issues.

CONNECT



twitter.com/nationalFFA



facebook.com/nationalFFA



instagram.com/nationalFFA

FFA NEWS FROM ACROSS THE U.S.

A place to celebrate your FFA achievements, chapter successes and good deeds



HAMILTON FFA, TX

Miss Texas Angus

Faith Massinghill isn't your average beauty queen. As Miss Texas Angus, her sash and crown make her an ambassador for an entire industry, traveling thousands of miles to educate the public about the Angus breed and the beef industry.

Faith's three rules for leadership are always keep an open mind to ideas, lead with a smile and always be the one to take the first step.



MORE ONLINE

Visit FFAnewhorizons.org for more on Faith's year as Miss Texas Angus.



John Allen, center, sports FFA boots each day in support of FFA.

THE BOOTS ARE MADE FOR TEACHING

JUMPERTOWN FFA, MS

John Allen, FFA advisor at Jumpertown High School, carries on his family's FFA legacy. Allen's grandfather, Merril T. Cartwright, was National FFA Vice President in 1949 and his father and uncle served as state officers.

To demonstrate his FFA pride, Allen sports a pair of FFA boots every day. Everyone who sees him knows that FFA is his support, foundation and identity, both metaphorically and physically.



OLIVET FFA, MI

Nothing Corny about Giving

The Olivet FFA chapter hosted a corn maze and haunted trail in partnership with Foods Resource Bank (FRB), a charity that raises money to help people in developing countries cultivate their own food. The chapter and FRB plan to make this event a yearly occurrence, allowing them to raise awareness about agriculture and help the efforts to eradicate world hunger.

PELION FFA, SC

A Platform for a New Panther

FFA members at Pelion High School raised the \$2,200 needed for a statue of a panther to adorn the school's student entrance. They hosted greenhouse plant sales in order to purchase the statue and building supplies. With the help of the PHS building construction program, the FFA members contributed their time and labor to build the stone platform for the statue. Local businesses and community members donated supplies, guidance and covered shipping costs.

Meals of Hope

This spring, as you plan your chapter events, consider an activity that will help combat hunger across the U.S. You can follow the lead of many other FFA chapters and state associations that have organized food packing parties through the Meals of Hope organization. To date, Meals of Hope has packaged and distributed more than 30 million meals.

All meals packed by your FFA chapter will be provided to recipients free of charge through well-established food banks throughout the country. To a child who is dealing with the stress and insecurity of not knowing how or when they will receive their next meal, a comforting bowl of macaroni and cheese or beans and rice (both fortified with soy protein and 21 vitamins and minerals), provides a bit of hope to carry them through another day.

Visit FFAnewhorizons.org/mealsofhope to learn more.



Keep us informed! This is your chance to be a part of *FFA New Horizons*. Send us a short article about your latest chapter activities, awards you've received or even your involvement outside FFA.

Want an easy way to send your story? Email a photo, your story and contact information to newhorizons@ffa.org. All photos need to be in color and a minimum of 1 MB in size.

Or, mail to:
FFA New Horizons
P.O. Box 68960
Indianapolis, IN 46268

**YOUR
TURN**

MEET SIX FFA SHINING STARS



Wrangler, the sponsor of FFA Faces, will award a pair of jeans to featured members



Destiny Matthews

COLCORD FFA, OK

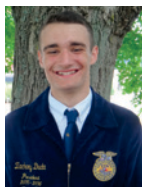
This high school senior has served as FFA chapter president and treasurer. She has participated in the public speaking, ag communications, and food science and technology career development events (CDEs).



Megan Lieran

LITTLE SWITZERLAND FFA, IA

FFA has allowed Megan to come into her own, serving in various officer roles and playing a vital role on the chapter horse evaluation team. Through FFA, Megan has found her passion and become part of a team.



Zachary Duda

WOODBURY FFA, CT

As chapter president, Zachary has devoted his time to helping his fellow chapter members and encouraging them with his gregarious personality. He has competed in the parliamentary procedure and agricultural sales CDEs.



Viral Patel

MADISON COUNTY FFA, GA

Viral has brought pride to his chapter, competing at the national level for the agriscience fair and his proficiency area. He created his own program to teach other students leadership skills through seminars and activities.



Bailey Wert

CAMPBELL COUNTY FFA, KY

Bailey uses her leadership skills in her roles as FFA chapter president and a regional reporter. She says she strives to help her fellow chapter members and those in her region educate the public about agriculture.



Ryan Cox

PINKERTON ACADEMY FFA, NH

Ryan serves as the New Hampshire FFA state president, making him the third sibling in his family to be a state officer. Outside of FFA, he runs track, serves on student council and interns with the New Hampshire Farm Bureau.

Nominate yourself to be considered for FFA Faces by following the steps below.

Questions? Email ffanation@jnlcom.com.

1 GO ONLINE

Visit www.ffafaces.com and click on Nominations. You can nominate yourself or another current FFA member.

2 DESCRIBE

Fill out the form to tell us about you – your FFA involvement, school activities, future plans and more.

3 UPLOAD

Find a great photo of yourself – head and shoulders photos work best – and upload it as part of the nomination form.

LONG LIVE six string storytellers.

LONG LIVE Georgia to Texas by way of Tennessee.

LONG LIVE having a little Hank in ya.

LONG LIVE playing true to yourself.

LONG LIVE COWBOYS.®



JASON ALDEAN

in Wrangler Retro Relaxed Boot Cut Jeans



LONG LIVE COWBOYS.®

wrangler.com





Two Norco FFA members attended the 2015 National FFA Convention & Expo to present their \$5 Challenge project as part of the National Model of Innovation Chapter Awards.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY Frank Ordoñez

GIMME' FIVE

California FFA chapter challenges seniors to make their community better with \$5

Could you make a positive impact on your community with just \$5? That's the question agriculture teacher

Robin Grundmeyer asked senior FFA members at Norco High School in California when she started the school's \$5 Challenge eight years ago.

The \$5 Challenge is now an annual tradition for the senior class, and students look forward to it all through high school.

"I wanted to create a capstone senior project that involves service, supply and demand, and needs versus wants," Grundmeyer says. "I had read online about a teacher doing a similar class project, so I tweaked it to incorporate community service."

NORCO FFA \$5 CHALLENGE

Every January, Grundmeyer gives each senior FFA member the project rules and requirements with a \$5 bill stapled to it. They have until April to complete the challenge either alone or in a group, and they are required to give a presentation to a panel of judges about what they did with the money. Winners receive gift cards.

"The judges are school administrators, city council members and people from our community," Grundmeyer says. "That helps get the word out about the project."

Students often team up in groups of four or five. They can also ask for help from community members

and local businesses.

"One year, some students put on a carnival in our school parking lot, and they donated all the money they raised to the local animal shelter," Grundmeyer says. "Kids have sold carnations at school to support the Children's Hospital of Orange County. One student made and sold hair bows to support the Wounded Warrior Project. A lot of kids get additional donations, and one girl donated her money to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation in memory of her aunt."

The possibilities are endless, and the results have been impressive. In 2015, 42 students turned \$210 of seed money into more than \$1,200, which was donated to various

community organizations and charities. They also donated more than 500 hours of their time to the community.

SNOW CONE, ANYONE?

Diane Vavala, a recent graduate of Norco High School, completed the \$5 Challenge in spring 2015.

"We formed a group of 10 students, so we had \$50 to start with," Diane says. "It was really hot outside, so we decided to rent a snow cone machine and sell snow cones for \$1 at lunch. We did it over three days, and we made more than \$300."

The students sold snow cones in several flavors, including blue raspberry, sour apple, cotton candy and bubble gum.

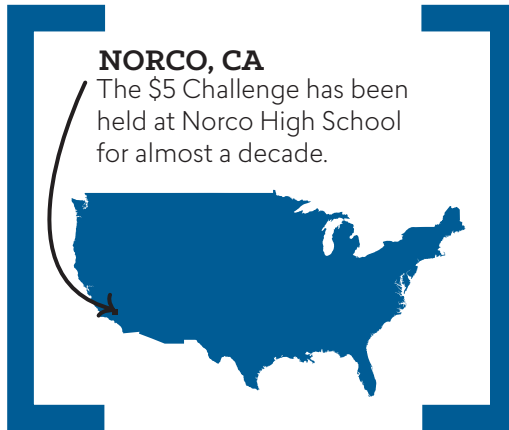
"We had kids lining up to buy them," Diane says. "It was so successful that we rented out

the snow cone machine a second time to see how much more money we could raise."

Diane and her peers donated their profits to the Norco Animal Shelter and even got to visit the shelter

NORCO, CA

The \$5 Challenge has been held at Norco High School for almost a decade.



during one of their lunch periods.

"The \$5 Challenge helped me learn to speak out and not be shy," Diane says. "We made new connections with people from the rental company and at the animal shelter. It was such a fun experience to help our community."

Because of their efforts, Norco FFA was one of 10 chapters from across the U.S. selected as a Model of Innovation finalist in the area of student development at the National FFA Convention & Expo in 2015.

"It has been pretty cool to see the outreach of the project," Grundmeyer says. "There is evidence of the \$5 Challenge all around our department – things current students see that are a result of the challenge. Teenagers often say they can't do this or that. But this project teaches them that they can actually do a lot with \$5."

– Jessica Mozo



MORE ONLINE

To watch a video describing two Norco FFA members' projects, visit FFAnewhorizons.org/NorcoFFA.

ORGANIZATIONS BENEFITED FROM \$5 PROJECT:

WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT

www.woundedwarriorproject.com

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

www.cancer.org

NORCO SENIOR CENTER NORCO ANIMAL CONTROL

www.norco.ca.us

NORCO HIGH SCHOOL FARM

www.cnusd.k12.ca.us/nohs

CORONA NORCO RESCUE MISSION

www.inlandempirerescuemission.org





CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

Stay connected with another form of membership that will follow you wherever life leads. Graduating FFA members receive 5 FREE years of FFA Alumni membership!

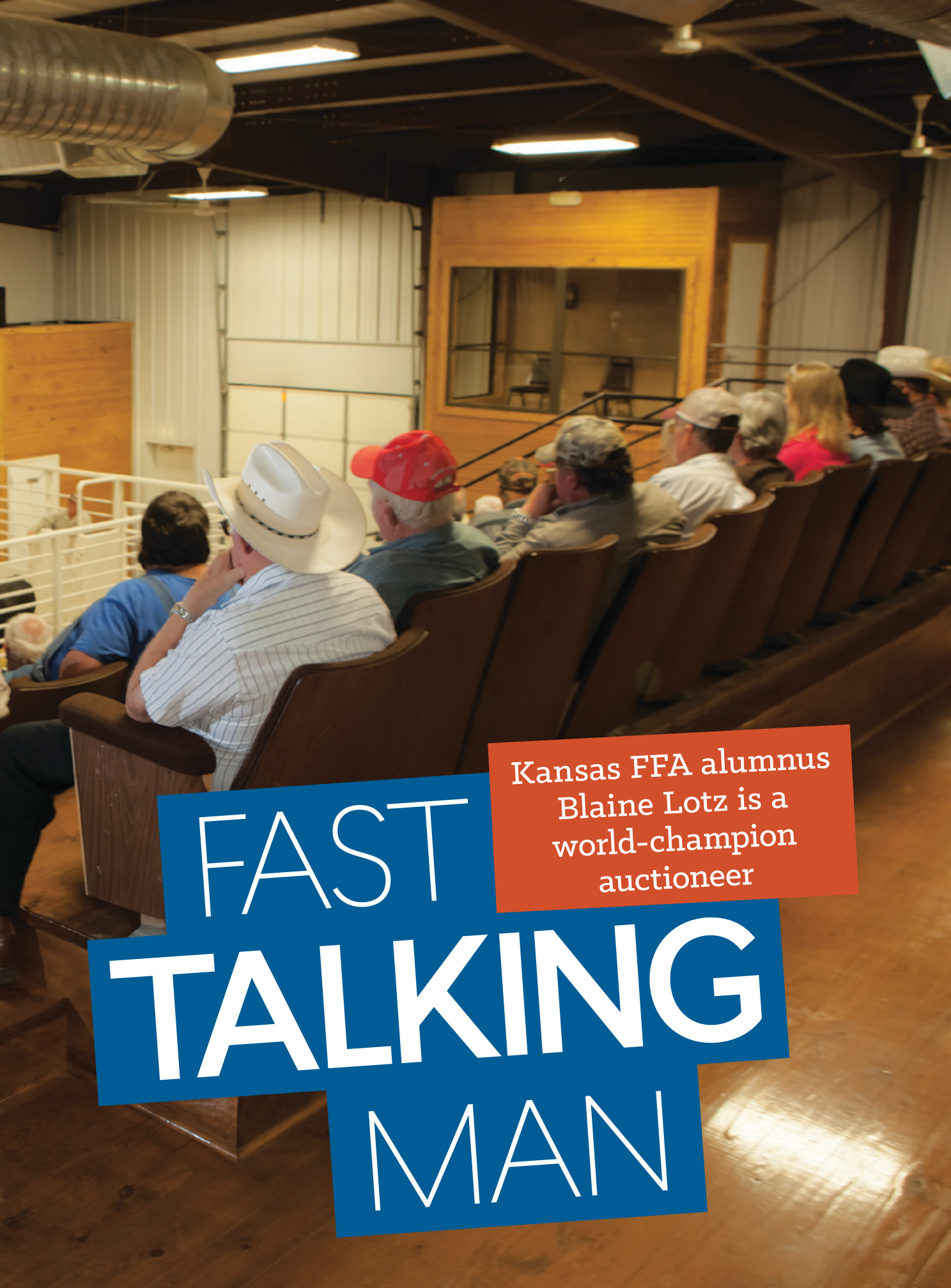
Sign up and take advantage of your FFA Alumni membership. Log into the Student Toolbox from your FFA.org account and access Account Settings. Click Edit Personal Profile and select Advance to Alumni. If your chapter does not have an alumni chapter, select the state-at-large chapter.

Congratulations from National FFA Alumni Association!

#FFAalumni



PHOTOGRAPHY BY Frank Ordoñez



Kansas FFA alumnus
Blaine Lotz is a
world-champion
auctioneer

FAST TALKING MAN

Third-generation auctioneer Blaine Lotz of Edna, Kan., was almost born on an auction block. His mom, Carla, is an auctioneer and went into labor with Blaine 45 minutes after finishing an auction.

“She auctioneered to me instead of singing lullabies,” says Lotz, now 22. “I learned to count by counting cattle.”

Lotz’s grandfather was also an auctioneer, and his dad, Mike, is a professional cattle order buyer who buys cattle for ranchers and farmers on commission. So it’s not surprising Blaine grew up to be an auctioneer.

WORLD LIVESTOCK AUCTIONEER CHAMPION

What is surprising to many is that the former president of the Labette County FFA Chapter won the Livestock Marketing Association’s (LMA) World Livestock Auctioneer Championship in June 2014 at the young age of 20, proving he has some world-class talent. He competed against 30 other auctioneers from around the U.S. and Canada whose average age was between 35 and 40. The contest was held in Knoxville, Iowa.

“I had watched the World Livestock Auctioneer Championship on TV growing up. It is to auctioneering as the Super Bowl is to the NFL – there’s no greater championship,” Lotz says. “It was my goal to win it someday. I won seventh place when I was 19, which was a huge accomplishment. Magically, I ended up winning first place at age 20.”

Along with the championship title, Lotz won a customized 2014 Ford F-150 pickup, \$5,000 cash, a world champion Gist belt buckle, briefcase and ring, and a gavel, among other prizes. He also spent a year traveling to represent the LMA, making more than 50 livestock market appearances.

Lotz’s former FFA advisors, Dustin Wiley and John Frazier, weren’t surprised at his success. During his four years in FFA, Lotz was a state champion FFA Creed speaker and won his way to several national contests for which he had to qualify as top in the state.

“The first time I heard Blaine give the FFA Creed, I about fell out of my chair,” Frazier says. “He’s very gifted. When you listen to him speak, it’s incredible – he’s a tremendous auctioneer and role model. I tell him he needs to start singing country music. He just laughs.”



WHAT DOES AN AUCTIONEER ACTUALLY SAY?

The auctioneer uses his fast talking skills to let all bidders know two basic numbers – “the have,” which is the amount that’s currently bid, and “the want,” which is the higher bid the auctioneer is accepting.

In between saying these two numbers, he adds filler words or sounds (like “dollar bid” or “give me now” or “will ya bid”) to make the overall experience more pleasing to the ear and to give the bidders time to decide if they want to make the bid at the higher dollar amount.

Wiley says he feels “super fortunate” to have had Lotz as a student.

“When he came in as a freshman, he was a man in a 14-year-old’s body. He was touched by God with the ability to speak and communicate,” Wiley says. “He’s a leader by example in the way he carries himself and a self-starter from day one.”

BECOMING AN AUCTIONEER

At age 15, Lotz attended the Western College of Auctioneering in Billings, Mont. One month after finishing the two-week program, Lotz performed his first auction. Today, he makes a living as an auctioneer, performing four live auctions per week in Kansas and Oklahoma markets.

“I’m a person who has to be doing something all the time, and auctioneering is fast-paced, so it gets me in my zone and makes me happy,” Lotz says. “It’s exciting because you never know what animal will walk through that gate that I get to sell. I interact with both buyers and sellers. For some sellers, that may be their only paycheck for the entire year, so my job is to sell it for them at the best price I can.”

What makes a good auctioneer, you may ask? It’s not just about talking fast – you also have to be pleasurable to listen to and know the livestock business – what you’re

selling, and what it’s worth – so you can make the most money possible for a seller.

In competition, contestants are judged on voice quality, the clarity of their auction chant, and their ability to catch bids and keep the sale flowing.

But most importantly is an auctioneer’s honesty, character and integrity.

“Blaine never put himself on a pedestal. He never looked down on anybody,” Wiley says. “Life can be hard for kids who are ultra-successful, because people get jealous of them. But if you were the kid with a rough home life and shabby clothes, Blaine was your friend. If you were the star athlete, he was your friend too. He’s a person of tremendous character.”

Lotz credits his experience in FFA as one reason for his success.

“Labette County FFA is an outstanding program. It benefited me more than any other high school class,” Lotz says. “To this day, I still love all my ag teachers. They’re like family.”

Wiley says Lotz is “a living example of what FFA is all about.”

“He’s supportive of others, a strong competitor, and he cherished his teammates and his advisors,” Wiley says. “We’re very blessed to have him.”

– Jessica Mozo



Blaine Lotz of Edna, Kan., sells a lot (or grouping) of cattle at a local Kansas market.

Kidding Around

Goats serve as the primary protein source for many countries

Although beef and chicken may take center stage on American dinner tables, goat meat makes up a staggering 63 percent of all red meat consumption worldwide.

Goats are the primary protein source in many African, Middle Eastern, Southeast Asian and Caribbean countries.

Meat goats are also the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. livestock industry.

With more and more immigrants bringing their native food traditions to the U.S., the demand for goat's meat is increasing rapidly. To meet the rising demand, approximately 1.5 million pounds of goat meat is imported each week from Australia and New Zealand, in addition to domestic goat production.

Goat's meat is incredibly lean, offering up to 23 grams of protein and only 122 calories per 3 ounces of cooked meat, while beef provides 25 grams of protein and 179 calories. Goat's meat is also low in saturated fat and cholesterol.



15,000

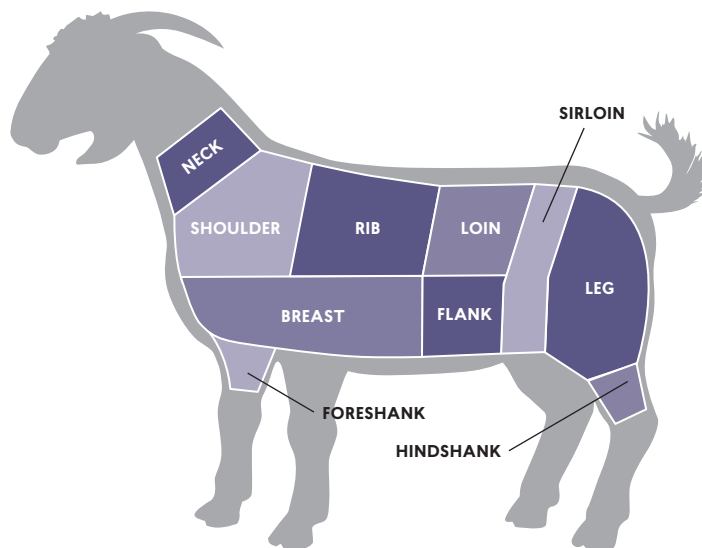
Goats have 15,000 taste buds.

450 million

There are approximately 450 million goats in the world.

Common Goat Cuts

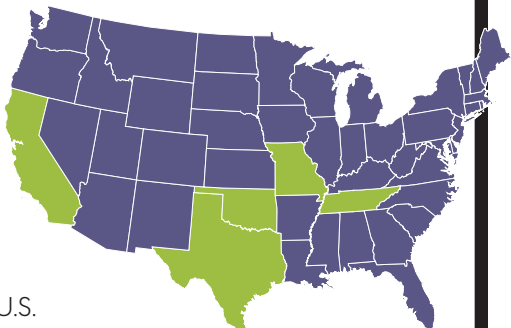
A goat carcass is divided into basic cuts (shown below), which have distinctive characteristics based on the amount of muscle tissue. Visit FFAnewhorizons.org to learn more.



Top Meat Goat States

Based on the USDA 2012 Census of Agriculture, the top meat goat-producing states include Texas, Tennessee, California, Oklahoma and Missouri.

Texas represents 38 percent of the entire U.S. meat goat inventory. Its dry climate, available forages and extending grazing season make Texas well-suited for meat goats.



Breeds of Meat Goats

THERE ARE MORE THAN 210 BREEDS OF GOATS IN THE WORLD, BUT SOME ARE BRED SPECIFICALLY FOR MEAT.

1 BOER: These large-framed goats are prized for their growth rate and fertility. They originated in South Africa and have short, curved horns.

2 FAINTING GOAT: Also called myotonic goats, these animals become rigid and fall over when startled. They are hardy and have a long breeding season.

3 SPANISH: Also called the brush or scrub goat, this was the standard meat breed in the U.S. until 1980, when the Boer goat was introduced. Spanish explorers brought their predecessors to America.

4 KIKO: Another large-framed goat, the Kiko originated in New Zealand and made its way to the U.S. in the 1990s. These goats are hardy and fare well in poor conditions.

5 PYGMY: Mostly kept as pets, these little guys have a surprising amount of meat on their compact bodies.

more
on our
app

Download the *FFA New Horizons* app to see FFA members' photos of their goats. For details on how to download the app, visit page 2.

'TIS SO SWEET

Ohio FFA members get a taste of food science careers by developing new ice cream flavors



Versailles FFA members experiment with creating their own ice cream, starting with a vanilla or chocolate base, then adding unique flavors.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY Frank Ordoñez

FFA chapters and other student groups across Ohio have been touring Velvet Ice Cream's factory in Utica for decades to learn what it takes to create the smooth, creamy dessert. But in 2015, the Versailles FFA Chapter had the opportunity to go behind the scenes and conduct a food science project to develop a brand-new flavor for Velvet Ice Cream.

"Students in our food science and technology class worked in groups of two or three to design a new ice cream variety," says Dena Wuebker, Versailles FFA advisor. "The ice cream variety had to be a flavor Velvet was not currently selling, and each student group had to start with a vanilla or chocolate-based ice cream."

Wuebker worked with Velvet Ice Cream to create a curriculum for students to learn how to become ice cream makers, from inventing flavor profiles to packaging, shrink-wrapping and marketing the final product.

"We try to show students the science behind ice cream production," says Nathan Arnold, marketing manager at Velvet Ice Cream and an FFA alumnus. "We really value education and teaching youth about agriculture and food science. It's a growing industry, and Velvet Ice Cream looks for employees with a food science background."

The students began by consulting Chef Michael Delligatta from the Inn of Versailles to create their flavor profiles. He offered suggestions and sampled flavors the students created.

"The chef was helpful in getting students to think outside the box and enhance their flavors, so they didn't just taste like vanilla," Wuebker says. "A few students completely scrapped their first idea. One group initially wanted to make fish taco ice cream."

The flavors the students decided upon included lemon ginger, peanut butter and jelly, banana nut bread with salty caramel, red velvet s'mores, cinnamon sugar doughnuts, wittles with Skittles, berry lemonade sweet tea, and green apple Jolly Rancher. Students developed the front and back label of an ice cream container, including a

nutritional label for each variety, and created a marketing plan.

Taste tests were conducted at Versailles High School, where students chose their three favorites: red velvet s'mores, lemon ginger, and banana nut bread with salty caramel. Then those three flavors were taken to the 2015 Ohio State FFA Convention to be sampled by FFA members, parents, alumni and sponsors from across the state. Representatives from Velvet Ice Cream also sampled the flavors, and lemon ginger was their favorite.

"We liked the lemon ginger most because it had a ginger candy inclusion, which gave the lemon a spicy kick," Arnold says. "It's a flavor we have considered adding to our lineup for a limited edition variety."

Regardless of what career path students choose, Wuebker says the food science project was worthwhile for all 22 students who participated.

"It helped them understand the process of making a product and understand there are regulations, such as FDA or USDA standards, you have to comply with," she says. "They also learned how a business markets a product because they had to market their own product. The students really enjoyed it – many said it was their favorite part of the school year."

Three members of Versailles FFA were invited to do a presentation about their ice cream project on the opening day of the 2015 Ohio State Fair.

Versailles High School offered the food science and technology course for the first time in 2014-2015, and Wuebker plans to continue teaching it every other year.

"We change our courses to meet demands in the industry, and there are more than 1,000 food processing plants in Ohio," she says. "About 50 percent of those plants are within 50 miles of our school, so that's one reason we felt the need to teach this class. Ohio is fifth in the nation for food processing plants, so there's a huge demand for workers in the food science field."

– Jessica Mozo

FOOD SCIENCE CAREERS

Versailles FFA members used this fun ice cream project to get a taste of the food science industry. If that sounds interesting to you, here are six areas to consider in this important career field.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Develop new food products or improve the quality, performance and/or safety of existing products.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT:

Investigate scientific principles and phenomena as they pertain to specific food components, food products or food processes.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT:

Combine knowledge of raw materials and ingredients with food processing applications. Often they work closely with product development in the manufacture of food products.

QUALITY ASSURANCE:

Analyze the components of food products and monitor the finished product for conformity to company and government standards.

REGULATION:

Develop policy, enforce food sanitation and labeling regulations, or ensure the safety of our food supply.

MANAGEMENT:

Be involved in the organization, operation and development of food processing companies. Oversee employees and operations in the processing of specific foods.

Source: Pennsylvania State University Department of Food Science



KEEPING THE FARM

Young Texan helps farm
families with future plans



PHOTOGRAPHY BY Frank Ordoñez



As a teenager, Riley Branch watched his family grapple with how they could afford to inherit the family ranch with the possibility of an expensive estate tax. Now, the Aspermont native is returning to his hometown to practice law, helping other families pass on the farm while continuing his family's farming tradition.

Every Texas farm and ranch is as unique as the family who stewards the land. No one-size-fits-all formula exists for passing on the farm.

"Each family's case is different in terms of what the specific needs are," Branch says.

"Estate taxes can add more complexity," says Susan Kibbe,

executive director for the South Texans' Property Rights Association (STPRA). "A farm family might be land rich and cash poor," she says. "If you have to pay estate tax on higher-valued land, you're put in

"I realized that, as an attorney, I could really help farms plan for the future."

– Riley Branch

a position where you're forced to sell some of the land to pay the estate tax."

That was the situation for Branch's family.

"My grandmother, who owned the ranch, got Alzheimer's disease," he says. "She hadn't done comprehensive

estate planning, and our family realized we might have to sell off some of the land to pay estate tax."

Fortunately, they developed a plan to retain family ownership of the ranch, which Riley's father and uncle operate.

The experience marked Riley.

"There was so much uncertainty. That was the time when becoming an attorney crossed my mind," he says.

The idea crystallized during college, as he found farm succession a common concern for U.S. farm families while he traveled more than 100,000

miles as National FFA Western Region Vice President.

"I realized that, as an attorney, I could really help farms plan for the future," says Riley, who holds agriculture, business and law degrees from Texas Tech.



Riley Branch says his own family's ranching experiences have prepared him for a career in agricultural law.

Tax planning isn't the only concern for farm succession plans, Kibbe says. Water and mineral rights and eminent domain issues around energy and transportation lines can create complications. "Eminent domain can split up farms and ranches and inhibit you from keeping your land intact," Kibbe says.

But higher land valuations in Texas, especially for farms near growing populations, are a common concern.

"Almost every bit of my land would be salable for development," says Pearson Knolle, a 73-year-old retired dairyman from Sandia, 17 miles from Corpus Christi.

Knolle says his three children would almost certainly owe estate taxes if his land was not designated for agriculture. He's pleased that his children want the land to stay in farming.

"I'm getting the farms in the

best shape possible to pass on," says Knolle, who has focused his retirement on improving field entrances, pastures and fences. "After I'm gone, it's up to them to keep them that way."

In Aspermont, Riley Branch is opening a law office to help clients navigate the legal issues of passing on their farms and ranches. Just starting out, he'll draw on advice from mentors and other attorneys.

"I'm really proud of the work that attorneys and agriculturists have done to maintain the ability of farming operations to stay intact for the next generation," he says.

And he'll farm. He's in a cattle partnership with his father and sister.

"We've started with 40 brood cows, and that's a tiny herd in Texas," he says. "I've had my time in the fast lane, and I'm really looking forward

to returning to the farm to maintain our family's tradition and way of life."

That may be the most important reason for policy and plans favorable for keeping farms in families.

"The younger generation always seems to come back to the land," Kibbe says. "The perpetuation of land ownership in families is something that society should cherish and protect."

— Matthew D. Ernst



MORE ONLINE

Learn more about careers in agricultural law by visiting FFAnewhorizons.org.

GET TO KNOW YOUR NATIONAL FFA OFFICERS

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF IN TWO SENTENCES.

TAYLOR: I grew up on my family's small farm in Vilonia, Ark., where I raised and showed market goats, registered Boer goats, horses, and hogs. When I am not helping out on the farm or attending school at Southern Arkansas University, I love to cook and blog!

NICK: Everything I do, I try to do with as much enthusiasm as possible! I really like going places I've never gone before, blues music and the Starbucks app – I am forever grateful for its caffeine rush-inducing powers.

ABBEY: I am a Georgia-grown girl who has a passion for faith, family and the Georgia Bulldogs. When not in FFA Official Dress I love to practice my photography skills on the farm.

ABRAH: I am a small-town girl from Northeast Iowa who loves the outdoors, music and anything that

involves quality time with friends! You can find me with Starbucks coffee in hand, cracking up to someone else's jokes, or ready to go on a long run.

SYDNEY: I am a proud Buckeye who loves to travel, experience new things and spend quality time with my loved ones. I love to eat, read, watch movies and laugh.

SARAH: I was raised on Star Wars, am Captain America's No. 2 fan, and cried once I turned 11 because I hadn't received a letter from Hogwarts – basically a nerdy little Utahn. I love anything outdoors and in the sunshine that puts a smile on my face (i.e., backpacking, sports).

OK, NOW TELL US ABOUT ONE OF YOUR TEAMMATES IN TWO SENTENCES.

TAYLOR: Abbey's extended family owns a guitar and drum company, and her immediate family raises cattle. When she isn't cheering on her

Georgia Bulldogs, she serenades her cattle with a Gretsch guitar.

NICK: Sydney was once offered the role of Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter movies but turned it down to focus on her career in hip-hop and R&B. As a teammate, she's an awesome motivator – kind of like the old guy from the Rocky movies!

ABBEY: Abrah is a strong woman of faith and has a beautiful singing voice. Fun fact: She learned to juggle within just one hour of being at the National FFA Center in December.

ABRAH: Taylor is one of the most genuine and thoughtful humans you will ever meet. Watch out though. She will get you with her witty comebacks and complex sarcasm that you never see coming!

SYDNEY: The force is with Sarah because she is the biggest Star Wars and Captain America fanatic I've ever met! She's also as sweet as chocolate – which is one of her favorite things to eat.

Taylor McNeel

NATIONAL FFA PRESIDENT

Taylor grew up on a farm in Vilonia, Ark., where she raised and showed goats. She has a strong passion for agricultural policy and is studying agricultural business and Spanish.



Nick Baker

NATIONAL FFA SECRETARY

This Tennessee native had a lawn care business as his supervised agricultural experience (SAE). Nick's goal is to serve in the U.S. military and focus on food security and hunger issues.



Abbey Gretsch

SOUTHERN REGION
VICE PRESIDENT

Abbey is proud of her strong agricultural roots, as her father is a farmer in Lexington, Ga., and she had her own beef herd. She hopes to become an ag educator.



SARAH: Nick ... he's the one guy on a team full of girls. What a lucky fella. He forgets stuff all over the place, but you're not going to find a more caring friend or better song improviser.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE FFA CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT (CDE)?

TAYLOR: I competed in livestock evaluation for three years. It's my favorite CDE because I showed livestock and was able to enhance the quality of my market goat herd. I also had a great team, traveled a lot to other states and have many stories from rides in the ag truck.

NICK: Dairy foods was cool because we got to taste all the different cheese, ice cream and milk. As Napoleon Dynamite might say, "This one tastes like it got into an onion patch."

ABBEY: It's so hard to choose just one! If I absolutely had to pick, I would say the agricultural communications CDE. Competing in this CDE was the driving factor of why I decided to pursue agricultural communications as a major in college.

ABRAH: Parliamentary Procedure rules in my world of CDEs! How many

other people can say they had fun learning Robert's Rules of Order?

SYDNEY: Food science and technology CDE. I participated in this CDE all four years of high school and even competed nationally! It was fun, challenging and taught me a lot about the make-up of food.

SARAH: Creed speaking! Simple – it's where I got my start, and it's where Greenhands across the country get their toes wet in FFA as well. It embeds in us a passion for agriculture and a pride for this vital industry.

IN THIS ISSUE, WE HAVE AN ARTICLE ABOUT SELFIES. WHAT'S THE BEST SELFIE YOU'VE EVER TAKEN?

TAYLOR: One of the coolest and most recent selfies I have taken was soon after our national officer team was elected. We ventured to downtown Indianapolis and visited Bankers Life Fieldhouse, where the 2016 National FFA Convention & Expo will be held.

NICK: My favorite selfie ever was when I got one of me standing in front of the stage with the entire arena full of FFA members at the National FFA Convention & Expo!

ABBEY: I definitely don't take a whole lot of selfies, but my favorite one was taken during a past state officer photo shoot with my friend Ashton Lovett. We were joking around and somehow I ended up capturing the perfect image of our friendship.

ABRAH: My selfie with a doughnut. The love I have for doughnuts is unmatched!

SYDNEY: A selfie on stage at the 2015 Ohio FFA State Convention talent show with tons of fellow FFA members!

SARAH: I was in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico (hot, humid, no makeup) helping at an orphanage, and the young girls loved playing with my hair. I probably lost a few handfuls due to the rough tugging and pulling, but the smiles on their beautiful faces as they showed off their braiding skills was totally worth the headache.



MORE ONLINE

Want to see the officers' selfies?
Visit FFAnewhorizons.org/selfie.

Abrah Meyer

CENTRAL REGION
VICE PRESIDENT

Hailing from Iowa, Abrah grew up playing the piano and four sports – volleyball, basketball, softball and track. Her goal is to work in ag education overseas.



Sydney Snider

EASTERN REGION
VICE PRESIDENT

Sydney grew up on a small farm in rural Ohio, raising beef cattle, swine and goats. Her career plan is to work in public relations for an ag company.



Sarah Draper

WESTERN REGION
VICE PRESIDENT

This Utah native found FFA SAE placements at local dairy and veterinarian's offices, and today, she is studying agricultural education for a career as an ag teacher.



Picture Perfect

Gardiner FFA Chapter spreads diversity awareness with the snap of a photo

Sometimes, a simple idea can lead to a big impact. That's what happened for the Gardiner High School FFA Chapter in Gardiner, Mont., as they brainstormed ways to spread the word about their young chapter during National FFA Week in 2015.

"We were trying to decide how to translate the idea that FFA is more than just farm and ranch kids," says chapter advisor Lori Hoppe. "Our area is very unique in that we don't have a lot of production agriculture because of our proximity to Yellowstone National Park. We wanted to show that kids in FFA have lots of different interests like sports, music and more, not just farming."

The solution came in the form of a photo that displays chapter members showing off their interests. Some are clad in FFA Official Dress, while others don sports

uniforms, show off musical instruments, and represent traditional farm and ranch life.

"We're a very small school, only about 80 students, and athletics are a big deal for us and our town," Hoppe says. "One thing we hear during recruitment is that students are busy with sports, but we wanted to show that FFA works around sports. All of our members have mixed interests."

Chapter president and high school junior Caitlin Cunningham says that during the brainstorming meeting, someone threw out the theme of "united by diversity."

"It really clicked," Caitlin says. "We all said, 'Yeah, that's it.'"

She adds that the goal was really to get the message across that FFA opens lots of doors.



"We wanted to show that you can be anything and do anything. FFA opens doors to all kinds of careers and experiences, not just strictly farming," she says.

After creating the photo with the help of the school's yearbook teacher, Hoppe says they've used it in lots of different ways, from printing it on a large vinyl sign to displaying it at convention and throughout National FFA Week.

"I posted the picture on my personal Facebook page, and it was picked up by someone at Northern Ag Network who shared it on their website. The kids were really excited. It went viral in our area," Hoppe says.

Since the photo came out, the chapter has experienced a lot more support from the community. Relatively new,

Gardiner FFA has only been in existence for three years, so Hoppe says gaining that support is key.

Caitlin agrees, adding that although the chapter's numbers haven't risen significantly, the awareness is excellent.

"Everyone who saw the photo loved it, and it got a lot of talk," she says. "People weren't even really sure what FFA was before. Now they're talking and thinking."

Hoppe and Caitlin both plan to continue growing the chapter and spreading the word about FFA.

"I just want to get the word out and make sure the community knows about us," Caitlin says.

"We've grown every year since we've started."

"We're continuing to think creatively," Hoppe adds. "The kids are already thinking of what to do for our next picture."

– Rachel Bertone

"During the brainstorming meeting, someone threw out the theme of 'united by diversity.' It really clicked."

– Caitlin Cunningham,
chapter president



Introducing



Bred for the spotlight. Fed for the win.



FEED YOUR CHAMPION THE WINNING FORMULA.

For a competitive advantage, there's no better place to start than your animal's nutrition. Make sure your show animal is beautiful inside and out with our most nutritionally balanced, affordable and easy-to-use feed yet – scientifically formulated to give you the winning edge. *Give your show animal the edge they need to win.*

www.nutrenaworld.com

Gain an extra edge: Show Edge™ supplements also available.

©2015 Cargill, Incorporated. All Rights Reserved.

Simply successful.

Social Graces

Brush up on selfie etiquette before you post

The term “selfie” has gone from casual, mid-2000s slang to an official entry in *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. Whether taking them or liking them, it’s safe to say all FFA members are familiar with selfies, which are officially defined as images taken of oneself by oneself using a digital camera, especially for posting on social networks.

In fact, with the ease of technology, taking photos – including selfies – has become a daily ritual of modern life. According to a recent article from Buffer.com, humans take almost 1 trillion photos per year. To put it in perspective, that’s more photos every few minutes than in the entire 19th century.

In both real and digital life, people notice faces first, which could point

to why selfies have become so popular. However, when posting photos of yourself and others on social media, it’s important to remember a few rules of etiquette.

DON'T OVERDO IT

When posted on a special occasion or to share an accomplishment, studies show selfies can actually help boost confidence. Having a great time at the national FFA convention & expo? Helping your community through volunteering? Feeling stylish in your FFA Official Dress? All are selfie-appropriate, providing a story behind the photo of something important happening in your day. However, posting a daily selfie or more than one in a few hours with

no real context can have a negative effect on human relationships. Research from that same Buffer.com article showed that oversharing caused people to feel as though they couldn’t relate as well to the person doing the posting.

BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS

Some situations are just plain inappropriate for selfies. For example, avoid snapping a photo at funerals, natural disasters, monuments commemorating wars or serious historical events, and any form of human suffering. This also includes situations where a selfie could put you or others in danger. It might look cool to post a photo



of yourself cruising along the highway with majestic mountains or the ocean in the background, but you should never take photos while driving, as that not only puts yourself, but others in danger as well.

This tip might seem like common sense, but many people have made the embarrassing mistake of taking a selfie at the wrong time. Another good rule of thumb is don't post anything you wouldn't want your parents to see. Be respectful and think before you post.

ASK PERMISSION

If you're sharing a solo selfie, everything's good, but if other people or friends are in your photo, check with them before posting. Not everyone may want his or her photo shared online, especially if they're applying for colleges or jobs.

LIVE OUTSIDE THE LENS

Social media is here to stay, and selfies can be fun and a great way to express yourself, but don't forget to see life with your eyes, not just your screens. It's important to live in the present and remember that no one's worth is measured by the number of likes they receive on a selfie. In the grand scheme of things, social media shouldn't take precedence over real-life interactions.

— Rachel Bertone



MORE ONLINE

What are your tips for taking selfies? Visit the online version of this article at FFAnewhorizons.org/selfie and comment with your thoughts.

Please Help Meals of Hope Make a Difference in Your Community!



You and your FFA chapter can host a Meals of Hope packaging event at your high school or a local church and ALL the meals packaged will stay in YOUR community!



AND FOR YOU: Meals of Hope will provide a full scholarship to the 2016 FFA Washington Leadership Conference (WLC) for one lucky FFA student from each participating high school.

Contact us today to learn how you can host a packaging event!
800-985-7698 ext 101 info@mealsofhope.org
www.MealsofHope.org



nationalffa

1d



nationalffa

Research shows that people notice faces first in photos, so remember to smile and show your love for FFA! #FFA #Smile

...

A Class Above

Five reasons you should become an agriculture teacher

Thinking about becoming an agriculture teacher? Here are the Top 5 reasons you should pursue a career in the classroom:

1. AG TEACHERS NEVER HAVE THE SAME DAY TWICE.

One day, agriculture teachers might be in a classroom or laboratory, the next visiting students in the field, preparing teams for an FFA Career Development Event, or leading a community service activity with their FFA chapter.

2. THERE'S A TEACHER SHORTAGE.

Nationally, we need more agriculture teachers. That produces a climate ripe for achieving employment immediately after college graduation. It is estimated that there will be hundreds of unfilled positions across the United States this year, simply because not enough students are choosing to be agricultural educators.

Agricultural educators are often on extended contracts, which means they get paid during the summer months and have the potential to earn a significantly higher salary than other teachers.

3. SHARE YOUR PASSION.

For many FFA members, agricultural education has played a huge role in their lives. From classroom instruction to hours spent preparing and competing, it's a contagious brand of leadership and skills development. What's better than taking that enthusiasm and using it to teach the next generation of agriculture leaders? As an agricultural educator, you'll be leading the way by sharing your passion for our future.

Because agriculture is such a broad subject, we need people with all experiences and backgrounds. Urban

agriculture is gaining in popularity, as is the addition of ag programs in urban settings. Did you know there are agriculture programs in Chicago and New York City? The only things potential ag teachers should have are a strong work ethic, dependability, and a passion for working with young people through agriculture.

4. IT'S A COMMUNITY.

Ag education is very much a family group. Ag teachers help each other out. That is one of the things that makes being an ag teacher so rewarding. The relationships you build with other ag teachers by going to workshops, state and national FFA convention, and other professional settings bring satisfaction and provide support when needed. Many states have mentoring programs for new ag teachers. These mentors guide you through your first few years on the job and help you become successful.

5. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Agricultural education uses a three-circle model of instruction. These are classroom and laboratory instruction, leadership development, and experiential learning. The successful integration of each of these three components results in a strong program that produces well-rounded individuals who are prepared to be leaders in agriculture, business and industry.

This allows you to reach students who might not succeed in a traditional classroom. It also allows cutting-edge topics like cloning, satellite mapping, biofuels, alternative energy and more to be introduced to the next generation of agriculture's leaders.

Thanks to the National Association of Agricultural Educators' Teach Ag campaign for much of this content. Learn about Teach Ag at www.naae.org/teaching.

GET STARTED IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Talk to your teacher or guidance counselor today about how to get started on the path to becoming an ag teacher. Here are some tips to help you get going:

- Talk to your ag teacher about what his or her job is like.
- Ask your teacher to schedule a job shadowing or internship experience for you.
- Develop a supervised agricultural experience program (SAE) involving agricultural education
- Check out colleges and universities that offer a degree in agricultural education.



BY THE NUMBERS

1,028

In 2015, there were 1,028 open agricultural teaching positions in the country, due in part to 201 new or expanded agricultural programs, and to 869 teachers leaving the profession or retiring.

80

80 of these positions went unfilled.

207

207 programs were being taught by individuals who had a teaching certificate, but who did not have a degree in agricultural education.

75

75 programs were closed due to low enrollment or budget cuts.



Paint It Pink

Alabama FFA alumna shines a light on breast cancer with pink tractor

Take a drive through Eufaula, Ala., and you might pass a bright pink tractor sitting quietly in a field. While the sight is surprising on its own, what's even more so is the message behind it. Cassandra Gifford, a 2015 graduate of Eufaula High School and a member of the school's FFA chapter, initially restored her personal tractor, marked with the fluorescent hue, because she wanted to do something different.

"I was on the tractor restoration team through FFA. We always competed in the Delo Tractor Restoration Competition, and after three years, I decided I wanted to restore my personal tractor," Cassandra says. "I first painted it pink because it was cool and different."

However, after doing some research, she came across information about breast cancer, and learned that pink was the universal color for breast cancer awareness.

"I decided to give my tractor a purpose," Cassandra says.

After the tractor was completed, Cassandra began bringing it to events – everything from FFA conventions to local peanut festivals – to raise awareness and money for area hospitals. The money went toward mammograms for patients who couldn't afford them as well as the equipment the hospitals needed. She aptly named the tractor "Hope."

Cassandra says that although she

has never personally been affected by breast cancer, throughout her travels with Hope and her research, it seemed that everyone she came in contact with had been touched by the disease in some way, whether having it themselves or knowing a family member or friend with the disease.

"I have really learned a lot more

"I first painted it pink because it was cool and different. [But then] I decided to give my tractor a purpose."

– Cassandra Gifford

now," Cassandra says. "I can't believe all the people that are affected and how I was blind to it before."

Cassandra finished her tractor in October 2014, and set a goal to raise \$20,000 for breast cancer awareness over the next few years. So far, she has personally raised about \$6,000. However, several organizations have also used Hope for fundraising, such as Alabama Farmers Federation Insurance, which raised about \$100,000 during a weeklong campaign.

"Anytime someone reaches out to ask to use it, even for just a parade, I like bringing it around. I like making new relationships and spreading the word about the cause, and motivating others to do something to help others.

Everyone has a hobby they can use to help people at the same time," Cassandra says.

She adds that her time in FFA had a very big influence on her efforts.

"Without FFA and my advisor, Mr. Buster Padgett, I wouldn't be where I am today," Cassandra says. "Mr. Padgett taught students to see things in different ways.

He really motivated me and encouraged me to have a passion through tractor restoration."

Cassandra is currently enrolled in Wallace Community College in Dothan and plans to transfer to Auburn University after obtaining an associate's degree. She wants to follow in Mr. Padgett's footsteps and become an agriculture teacher. "I want to teach tractor restoration," she says.

– Rachel Bertone



From the Crop Field to the Medical Field,
everyone is doing their part in

ALABAMA



EUFAULA FFA

**NO
TRESPASSING**

 Alabama
Farm Credit
1-877-681-6087

**NO
TRESPASSING**

 Alabama
Farm Credit
1-877-681-6087

FREE *PERSONALIZATION* *ON POLOS AND WOVEN SHIRTS**

THROUGH APRIL 30, 2016

Order online at ShopFFA.org • Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere



01014-40
\$29.50

00741-42
\$29.50

01523-42
\$29.50

California FFANEWS

SPRING 2016

VOL. 4 • NO. 3

CONTENTS



3

Greenhand Leadership
Conferences Inspire



6

Outstanding Chapter:
Lucerne Valley FFA



11

Chance of a Lifetime:
Reflecting on DC Trip

+

FFA Center Adds Offices
Ag Plate Funds Arrive
Social Media Q & A
State Officers on the Go
Chapter Scoops

4

California Success at
2015 National FFA Convention



Spring 2016
Volume 4 • Number 3

The CA FFA News is published
quarterly by California Association,
FFA.

California Association, FFA
Post Office Box 460
Galt, California 95632
(209) 744-1600
inbox@californiaffa.org
www.CalAgEd.org

Editor and Graphic Design:
Jennifer Luiz Patton
Twisted Twig Design & Print
news@californiaffa.org

We want to hear from you...

We are always looking for great
stories about members and
alumni around our state. Know
of a story that we should feature
in CA FFA News? Please email
news@californiaffa.org.

Submission deadlines:
Fall..... June 1st
Winter..... September 1st
Spring December 1st
Summer..... March 1st

Stay in touch...
"California FFA"



ADDITION OF NEW OFFICES AT FFA CENTER NOW COMPLETE

With the decision to bring additional entities involved
in Ag Education into the FFA Center, additional
office space was needed to accommodate staff from
the California FFA Foundation and the California
Agricultural Teachers' Association. Officials from
McCarthy Construction worked with the California
Association, FFA in designing and constructing
additional office space to meet those needs. While

donating a substantial portion of the renovation
costs, McCarthy Construction completed the
work in record time and with minimum disruption
of Center activities. The California Association,
FFA is extremely grateful to McCarthy
Construction for both their support and for the
beautiful job they did in creating this new office
space! Feel free to stop by and check it out. •

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY • 6 Fresno State Mid-Winter Field Day, CSU
Fresno • 9-11 World Ag Expo, Tulare • 12-13 MFE/ALA,
Modesto • 19-20 & 21-22 MFE/ALA, Visalia • 21-27 National
FFA Week **MARCH** • 8-11 Sacramento Leadership Experience,
Sacramento • 16 Capitol Ag Day **APRIL** • 22-23 Fresno State
Field Day, CSU Fresno • 23-26 State FFA Conference, Fresno

For a list of current FFA events please visit

www.CalAgEd.org

GREENHAND LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES INTRODUCE FRESHMEN TO THE OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN FFA

This year the California Association, FFA hosted a record-breaking 5,400 freshmen at 31 different Greenhand Leadership Conferences (GLC) that spread from Redding, located in the Superior Region, all the way to Imperial, in the Southern Region. GLC aims to introduce students to the benefits and opportunities in Agricultural Education, including SAE and FFA. GLC is no ordinary leadership experience; conference attendees are granted their "All Access Pass" which allows them to move through sessions and take an active role in learning how Agricultural

Education and FFA can have a positive, meaningful impact on their life. Throughout the day, students learn about the three ring model, the benefits of Agricultural Education, the leadership development continuum (GLC, MFE, ALA, SLE, and WLC), and leave the conference with a personal plan for success. For many, that plan also includes going back to their chapter to enhance their knowledge on FFA and ultimately pursuing their Greenhand Degree.

Wasco FFA brings GLC inspiration home to their chapter

Submitted by Noemi Esquivel

Each year, Wasco FFA welcomes over 100 new Greenhands into the chapter. This year, chapter officers and advisors decided to put on the first-inaugural "Greenhand Week" to celebrate their installation at the Greenhand ceremony. The officers wanted to bring back some aspects from the Greenhand Leadership Conference (GLC) to get more Greenhands involved in the Wasco FFA Chapter. During the week of November 9th, Wasco FFA held various activity and involvement days for Greenhands to participate in. They used a promotional video to advertise the new tradition. Starting on Monday, Wasco FFA chapter officers hosted mini-workshops within freshmen classes. One activity included a "What does FFA mean to you" mixer. On Tuesday, they held a relay race in the quad at Wasco High for all interested Greenhands. Retaining freshmen is an important part of a growing FFA program. We hope to continue this tradition in the future.

Lizbeth Garcia says: "I really enjoyed participating in the first-ever Greenhand Week with the FFA, I liked how they integrated leadership and involvement ideas from the GLC into the activities that they planned throughout the week. The most memorable part of Greenhand Week was when the officers came in and talked to us about what exactly FFA means to us. The Greenhand Conference made me want to be more involved with FFA and so did Greenhand Week." •



GREENHAND
Leadership
CONFERENCE

FFA Street Beat

Include #FFANews to be noticed for the next edition



lavffa The Greenhand Conference was a whole lot of fun. It was the first conference for the majority of the people who attended from our chapter. All participants learned what FFA can do for them and how to get involved be it hands-on activities, SAE, Conferences, Conventions, competitions, etc!!! **#FFAGLC #FFA #GREENHAND**

rc.ag.ed The Greenhand Leadership Conference was a success! From team building games to learning about opportunities in **#AgEd** and **#FFA**, these **#RCFFA** freshmen had a blast! **#FFAGLC @californiaffa**

woodlakeffa 50 of Woodlake FFA's best Greenhands traveled to the International Agricenter today for an unforgettable experience. They developed a better understanding of why FFA is the most elite youth organization and what opportunities they will be offered throughout their four years in the organization. Thank you **#ffaglc** for changing the lives of these future leaders in America. **#winlake**

CALIFORNIA SUCCESS AT 2015 NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION

The 88th National FFA Convention was held on October 28-31, 2015 in Louisville, Kentucky. The convention set an all-time attendance record with 65,357 members, teachers, and guests in attendance.

Below are the achievements of California members, chapters and educators. **National Champions are pictured.**

NATIONAL CONTESTS:

Agricultural Issues
Agriculture Mechanics
 Agricultural Sales
 Agronomy
 Creed Speaking
 Dairy Cattle Judging
 Enviro & Natural Resources
 Extemporaneous Speaking
 Farm Business Management
 Floriculture
 Forestry
 Horse Judging
Job Interview
 Livestock Evaluation
 Market Plan
 Meat Judging
Milk Quality & Products
 Nursery/Landscape
 Parliamentary Procedure (N)
Parliamentary Procedure
 Poultry
Prepared Public Speaking
 Veterinary Science

TEAM PLACING

2nd Gold
National Champions
 7th Gold
 3rd Gold
 2nd Gold
 10th Gold
 4th Gold
 2nd Gold
 — Silver
 8th Gold
 — Bronze
 4th Gold
National Champion
 10th Gold
 — Silver
 8th Gold
National Champion
 5th Gold
 2nd Gold
National Champion
 4th Gold
National Champion
 3rd Gold

CHAPTER

Tulare
Golden West
 Liberty Ranch
 Tullake
 Nipomo
 Petaluma
 Nevada Union
 West Valley
 Elk Grove
 Madera South
 Red Bluff
 Pioneer
Hughson
 Nipomo
 Galt
 Clovis East
Santa Maria
 Madera South
 Sierra
San Luis Obispo
 Bret Harte
Bear River
 Lassen



Agriculture Mechanics • Golden West



Job Interview
 Mark Borges • Hughson



Prepared Public Speaking
 Emma Turner • Bear River



Milk Quality and Products • Santa Maria



Advanced Parliamentary Procedure • San Luis Obispo



Agriscience Fair, Animal Systems • Talie L. Cloud • Sanger

AGRISCIENCE FAIR:

One California National Agriscience Fair Winner from 18 Finalists:

Animal Systems Talie L. Cloud Sanger

AMERICAN STAR AWARDS:

Star in Agriscience Finalist Jillian Ann Drake Fallbrook

VIP CITATION AWARD:

Jean Landeen CDE Consultant, Central Region Retired
 Dr. William Kellogg AgEd Teacher Educator, Cal Poly, SLO Retired

(Continued on page 5)

FFA Street Beat

Include #FFANews to be noticed for the next edition



NATIONAL PROFICIENCY AWARDS:

Two California National Proficiency Winners from 16 Finalists:

Specialty Animal Production Victor Elias Johnson Lemoore
Wildlife Production & Management Logan Douglas Oakdale

AMERICAN FFA DEGREE RECIPIENTS:

California had the third largest state total of degree recipients with 272 total recipients. Nationwide there were 3,434 American FFA Degree recipients awarded.

HONORARY AMERICAN FFA DEGREE RECIPIENTS:

Matt Patton	Ag Teacher	Elk Grove	Central Region
Mark Nlower	Ag Teacher	Modesto-Gregori	Central Region
Darol Fishman	Ag Coordinator	Merced JC	Central Region
Kimberly Arntz	Ag Teacher	Petaluma	North Coast Region
Michael Mederos	Ag Teacher	Tulare	San Joaquin Region
Scott Duffin	Ag Teacher	Fallbrook	Southern Region
Clemente Ayon	Ag Teacher	Santa Maria	South Coast Region
George Wold	Ag Teacher	Anderson	Superior Region

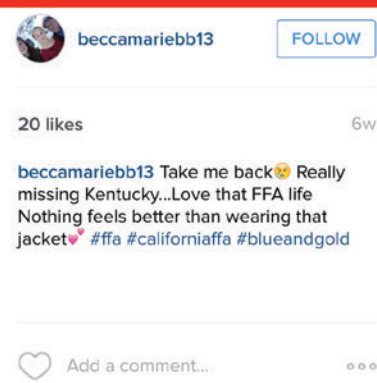
NATIONAL MODEL OF INNOVATION:

Norco FFA was a finalist in the Student Development category within the National Chapter Award program.

NATIONAL CHAPTER AWARDS:

California had 27 chapters recognized as National Award winners, with sixteen of those awarded one star. Two and three star chapters are listed below:

Three Star	Exeter	Littlerock	Norco
	Lodi	San Luis Obispo	
Two Star	Butte Valley	Holville	Pleasant Grove
	St. Helena	Santa Maria	Strathmore •



OUTSTANDING CHAPTER

Lucerne Valley FFA

Resting in the beautiful High Desert Section of the Southern Region, Lucerne Valley is a small scenic town of just under 7,000 people who are spread over 150 square miles. Our high school population is small, hovering around 215 students, but the Agriculture program touches nearly half, at 105 students. Lucerne Valley FFA was chartered in 1994 and since then we have had our one advisor and teacher, a Canadian transplant, Mr. Troy Van Bavel. Locally, we have many small livestock farms and the main crops are alfalfa and pistachios, with a few other varieties of specialty crops. There are three major mines that hug the surrounding mountains. Lucerne Valley FFA has thrived throughout these years largely due to the administration and community support, and the dedicated hard work of chapter members, past and present. The continued dedication, loyalty, and support by a variety of people, businesses, and community groups in our little town have played a major role in the success and reputation of our chapter.

Our chapter is smaller in terms of numbers, yet our membership is large within our

total population. Lucerne Valley agriculture department is able to offer the incoming freshmen earth science as a starter class, and then continue with a variety of classes in leadership, agriscience, landscape, and agriculture mechanics. It is in the earth science class where students receive the "eye-opening"

Lucerne Valley's FFA Chapter includes nearly half of the high school's population

unit on FFA, with every student earning their Greenhand degree and starting their SAE projects.

We have developed many traditions over the years. Every year, like other chapters, the Greenhands paint their hands green to develop team spirit and induct these members

into a storied and passionate group of young people. We also have administrative and staff support as the day is transformed around the Greenhand recipients. The chapter officers are able to present a leadership workshop during a class period filled with fun, challenging, and leadership focused activities. During the final

period of the day, the entire freshman class is released to the auditorium where they all are presented the Greenhand Degree during an official ceremony. This is a great way to ensure that nobody misses out on the importance of this degree and all that entails being a FFA member. The

second year members are geared to give their "Chapter Degree Presentations"; presentations that are student focused.

FFA Week activities have become a favorite to watch and indulge in as the students really enjoy themselves and the involvement from

{ Continued on page 7 }





staff. All week the classes participate in events that accumulate into a final competition where the entire FFA program is released for a half day to compete. Events include the a-frame, log ski, hay and straw stack, tractor pull, seven-legged race, strong man and woman, egg toss, pepper eating, and team tug-of-war.

The Chapter meetings we host are always huge events with students, staff, and families alike. With a committed officer team, we hold many unique activities to engage all our students. Events can range from capture the flag, to a huge Call of Duty "gamer"

tournament. Our chapter has been home to plenty of sectional officers, regional officers, and even a state officer back in 2001.

The members of the Lucerne Valley FFA Chapter are very dedicated to their SAE projects of various levels. Our chapter has a unique relationship with the local mining sites and students therefore are engaged in reclamation projects within the mining sites. Students collect, grow, care, and revegetate the mined areas in the rugged landscape surrounding our beautiful desert location. Students share their knowledge by working

give presentations and support to the local garden club, and provide assistance with family fun shooting days at the Lions Club Shooting Range.

The attitude we hold around here is that "We don't have to be in FFA - We Get To!" •

Photo captions

Opposite page, clockwise starting at top:

- Chapter meetings are well attended and combine business, fun and camaraderie for the chapter and the school.
- Landscape class completing planters ready to fill from plants grown in the greenhouse.
- FFA week activities are huge events for Lucerne Valley FFA. We celebrate with many different events like the tractor pull.

This page, clockwise starting at top left:

- Our annual chapter banquet highlights the members and supporters
- Ag mechanics projects
- Lucerne Valley FFA members gearing up to show their livestock projects at fair.
- Leadership Development is the main focus of Lucerne Valley FFA. Students are excited to attend the state conference.
- FFA week activities - tug-of-war



Cal Ag Plate

LICENSE PLATE FUNDS BENEFIT CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION, FFA

If you're like most of us, anytime you go to a FFA conference, field day, booster event or any other agriculture oriented activity there are a few unifying elements that always stand-out and let you know that you're in the right place. The school vans, boots, blue jackets and now the unifying agriculture license plate. Spotting a CalAgPlate at an FFA event, a livestock show or in any random parking lot is particularly exciting for those FFA members and advisors who can still recall the work that California Association, FFA members put into making the program a reality.

Five years ago at the State FFA Conference former CDFA Secretary A.G. Kawamura announced the CalAgPlate program, and 2015 marked the first year the FFA received funding for the program. Agriculture themed specialty license plates hit the road in 2013, following a tremendous campaign by California Association, FFA members to secure 7,500 paid license plate pledges. In 2015 the California Association, FFA received just over \$162,000 from the CalAgPlate program.

If you still haven't registered for your CalAgPlate, you can purchase a plate on the DMV website www.dmv.ca.gov and go to the "Online Services" link and then select "Special Interest Plates".

The program is funded with proceeds generated through the sale and renewal of specialized, agriculture-themed license plates through the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The funding has allowed the FFA to enhance and restore programs that were previously reduced due to budget cuts. The printing and delivery of the CA FFA News is one of many programs that was restored because of CalAgPlate funds.

The funds received so far are just the beginning. As additional plates are registered funding to California Association, FFA will exponentially increase - imagine the possibilities! Show your pride for California Agriculture and register for your CalAgPlate today. •



culian_jarli
Julian Carli
Sacramento-Sheldon FFA

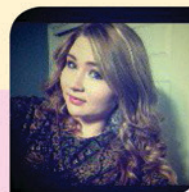
Jamming to the latest country songs!



brenaeholbert
Brenae Holbert
Lodi-Tokay FFA

On our way to CDE's, our members usually quiz each other, whether it be BIG knowledge or Floral ID.

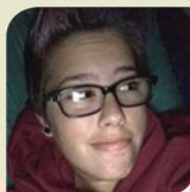
We tell jokes and talk about crazy moments in the Ag Department, while singing along to country songs. Some of our best moments have taken place on these car rides!!



falfal_98
Fallon Hammon
Exeter FFA

My friends and I pass time in the van by listening and singing

along to hip hop classics. Or we can be found making up freestyle raps. We even video some of our rides for funny outtakes in our chapter and banquet videos. The Exeter FFA knows how to have fun!



huhgirl
Nicole Snyder
Covina FFA

My friends and I pass time by listening and dancing and singing along to music. We also get the

chance to listen to our advisor talk about the different fun facts about where we are, especially Ag related ones. Of course we also practice for the competition and we try to find fun and new ways to practice for it.

We asked...you answered!

"Spring field day season is right around the corner. **#FFANews** asks **@CaliforniaFFA** members, what is your favorite way to pass time in the ag van driving to CDEs?"



mairijoJones

Mairi Jo Jones
Grass Valley-Nevada Union FFA

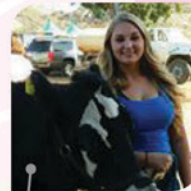
I introduced the animal game to our teams last year, and that always gets the brain thinkin' and the laughter goin'.



jordynn_rodriguez

Jordyn Rodriguez
Fullerton FFA

On our way to the competitions we constantly quiz each other and practice reasons. We laugh about past competition experiences and discuss what we can improve on and we always listen to Dixie Chicks!



mariemayhem6849

CJ Moore,
Menifee-Heritage FFA

We pass time during the van rides with singing old and new country music, oldies that our advisors listen to. Play games like holding signs to our teams in other vans to read as they drive past. Then getting serious and practicing for the competition.



lukeoleary

Luke O'Leary
San Luis Obispo FFA

We always play the game Connection! And of course, lots of great music play lists.

Attention members of California Association, FFA! Be sure to follow "California FFA" on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and Snapchat.



CHINO- DON LUGO FFA **Salute to Our Veterans for Veteran's Day**

Submitted by Cody Armstrong

The Don Lugo Chapter officers and members assisted in Riverside National Cemetery's "A Flag for All Heroes" flag placement ceremony on November 7th. Members and officers placed flags on the markers of America's heroes in recognition of the service that they provided our country. Several families, friends and supporters were there and proud to be part of this event that promotes gratitude to our Nation's military families. One of the most rewarding parts of the day was being able to meet with the other community members and families that were also helping with the flag placement. This is an activity that we will not soon forget and hope to repeat next year.



JACKSON-ARGONAUT FFA **Because of the Brave**

By Brittany Gold

On November 7th our FFA chapter volunteered at a clay shoot in celebration of Veterans Day. Our members took advantage of this opportunity to make a difference in our community and to honor those who give so much for us. While our members were helping with score cards, raffles and decorating, some were delivering water to shooters on the course and helping serve lunch. A few of our members participated in Honor Guard. This was a fun and humbling event. Our members met and got to know the veterans of our community, and be part of a ceremony to honor our fallen soldiers. It was a learning event as well. We had the opportunity to learn about the POW MIA table and what it symbolizes. Argonaut FFA "holds an in-born fondness" for our members of the Armed Forces, and are glad we could help make a difference in our home town. We are excited to volunteer and participate at the Lone Veterans Memorial Walk this spring.



Your Chapter **FFA**

Let Us Know Your Chapter's Scoop! Here's how...

1) Submit a 100-150 word article about your chapter's recent activity.

- a. Please do not include members or advisors names within the article.
- b. The article should be about an interesting/unique type of FFA activity. This is an opportunity to showcase new and innovative chapter activities.

2) Attach a GREAT quality digital photo.

- a. Photos should be in color and help further explain the submitted article.
- b. Photos must include members with appropriate clothing & behavior.
- c. Photos must be sent as individual jpeg files.

3) Email the above information to news@californiaffa.org.

The subject of the email must include your chapter's name. In the email, please include the author of the chapter scoop and title of the article.

4) Please reference page two for CA FFA News Submission Deadlines

{ Continued on page 14 }

A chance of a lifetime...

One member's reflection on her National Convention experience and the D.C. Monuments that inspired her

Submitted by
Gabby Castillo,
Surprise Valley

I am Gabby Castillo, the Vice-President of the Surprise Valley FFA chapter, located in the upper northeast corner of California. I was one of the many people who had the opportunity this year to attend the National FFA Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. I come from a very small community with only 45 students in our high school, grades 8-12. **Growing up in a small community it was a chance of a lifetime to be one of only nine students who got to go from our chapter.** Not only did we get the chance to attend the convention in Louisville, but also Washington, D.C. Looking back, all of the hard work and time put into fundraising for this

trip was tedious, but definitely worth it. It was a trip that I will never forget! It truly was that trip of a lifetime for a small town kid like myself. For some of us it was our first time flying, for all of us we explored Louisville for the last time as FFA members; we met-up with long lost friends and made new ones; visited some of the most memorable monuments and memorials, and experienced **pride from the impressed looks others gave us when they asked what "FFA" was** and when we explained why we wear the national blue corduroy.

Out of all of the remarkable things I got to experience, I loved seeing all of the memorials the most. They are absolutely stunning, and hold so much important history behind them. **Being able to see and experience the places dedicated to some of the most inspirational and brave people in our country's history, those who have made such changes for our lives, to make them better, is something to truly value each day.** If someone were to ask me if I would recommend for them to attend National Convention, I would say yes, in a heartbeat. •



STATE OFFICERS ON THE go

START

Indio FFA, thank you for introducing Bre and Dani to Indio-famous Date Shakes - they are delicious!!

The excitement was alive at **Shasta Lake-Central Valley FFA** as Sydnie and Dani saw the growth of their program!

Tim and Dani met amazingly motivated students as were introduced to the charter members of the **Porterville-Summit Charter FFA Chapter!**

Bre and Syd felt incredibly welcomed at **Hollister FFA!** From s'mores, stories and our very own pillows...we were not ready to go!

STATE OFFICERS SHARE

At the **Bakersfield-North FFA Chapter**, all officers enjoyed a homemade spaghetti dinner as we played Apples to Apples and chatted over our most embarrassing stories.

Woodland-Christian - Where Syd and Tim enjoyed a rockin' band, exotic burgers and a photo scavenger hunt... We couldn't have asked for a better time!

Oakhurst-Yosemite FFA + ice cream + late night chats in a camper = the priceless experience Sydnie and Joelle received!

Sydnie and Tim played ultimate frisbee and danced in the rain with the members of **Calipatria FFA!** A little storm can't ever darken these folk's day!

Woodland-Pioneer FFA, Bre and Dani felt that their time with you was unforgettable!

Riverdale FFA showed Dani and Trevor their passion for advocating agriculture!

Dani and Trevor enjoyed playing pool & the small town pride at **Tollhouse-Sierra FFA!**

Bre and Danielle with Indio FFA

Woodland FFA - From wearing nylons on our head to getting way too competitive while decorating pumpkins, Trev and Tim will always remember our visit to Woodland!



Joelle & Trevor with El Centro FFA

At **Menifee-Heritage**, Sydnie and Tim enjoyed sushi, froyo, and awesome conversations by the fire! The Arc (barn) and people at this place are unforgettable!

Alturas-Modoc FFA - From bonfires to tire swings, there's no doubt that you made Joelle and Tim feel right at home on our visit!

Foothill FFA - "OMG Joelle and Bre so didn't go here?!" With their awesome selections of Mexican food and enjoying some good old Netflix movies, Foothill sure rubbed some of their flare on us!

Danielle and Sydnie felt the comfort of small town USA with a warm and unbelievably friendly visit to **Bieber-Big Valley FFA!**

Not even a camel attack could knock down the time Trevor and Danielle had with **Chowchilla FFA!** Thank you for showing us the heart in your program.

Disneyland truly became the 'Happiest Place on Earth' when Syd and Trev got to experience its magic with the individuals of **Norco FFA**. We can't begin to express what an incredible time we had!

ON THE ROAD VISITING CHAPTERS

With the **O'Neals-Minarets Chapter** Syd and Jo jumped for joy (literally) and we were overjoyed getting to spend the day with some of the best people out there!

At **Visalia** Trevor and Sydnie felt like family-surrounded by great people and an incredible farm. Nobody is stopping these individuals from their mission of creating tradition

From sweet treats to even sweeter people, We had a day full of random acts of kindness and Sydnie and Joelle left **Laton FFA** with full hearts and tummies!

Danielle & Breanna enjoyed a night full of pizza, popcorn, giggles, and all things girly at a sleep over with the ladies of the **Imperial FFA Chapter!**

Lake Isabella-Kern Valley FFA - Ultimate Lip Sync Battle! Kern Valley FFA versus State Officers Tim and Bre! Even though we received second, we sure let loose and had a blast!

At **Modesto-Gregori FFA**, Trevor and Sydnie met some of the sweetest and most genuine members in the state! You guys rock..

You know when you're greeted by students in bow ties, the BEST Mexican food and dressy shoes, you're in for quite the time too! **Caruthers FFA** showed Syd and Joelle a class act!

Gridely FFA - Killer pizza and an even more killer volleyball game! Trevor and Bre were ecstatic to watch them play and hang out with awesome company

Sydnie and Danielle felt privileged to be a part of **Hayfork's** Homecoming, ya'll were quite the characters!

Dani and Bre loved the genuine conversations and half gallons of chocolate milk with the **Wildomar-Elsinore Aggies!**

Lone Pine FFA - YEE-HAW! Home of old westerns and billboard classics, Lone Pine sure rolled out the red carpet and showed city slickers Bre and Tim how to have a real good time!

At **Half Moon Bay**, Danielle and Joelle enjoyed trying 100% locally grown products and getting lost in an insane hay maze with you all!

Hemet FFA filled Sydnie and Trevor's bellies with food, the GREATEST cake and a multitude of laughs!

Biggs FFA - It was RICE to meet you! Thank you for taking us on an industry visit that we will never forget, you made our stay very memorable!

Merced-El Capitan FFA swag, a home-cooked meal, and funny stories made for a great experience for Dani and Trevor!

Livermore FFA, Sydnie and Bre had a shootin' good time playing laser tag and enjoyed the 'mini' (golf) experiences! Thanks for all the laughs and kindness.

Dance battles on DDR, and an epic bumper car battle made for a great night with the Perris FFA Chapter, Tim and Danielle enjoyed their time with y'all!

Bishop FFA - Out of this world sandwiches and extreme bowling consumed Tim and Bre's interest! But even more, the students were stars that shined the brightest!

Westwood FFA - These lumber jacks know how to snack on some good pizza while Bre and Trevor hung out and watched volleyball!

Macarthur-Fall River FFA - Trevor and Bre had a great time exchanging stories while watching the game! Macarthur FFA sure knows how to build connections

Kingsburg FFA - Ummm...Tim and Bre took awkward family photos to the extreme! Thank you for late night chats and even greater connections!

Just as Sydnie and Breanna bleed blue and gold, so does the Salinas Everett-Alvarez Chapter! They've got the best spirit, rallies and school colors!

Redding Mt. Lake - Joelle and Tim had a stellar time walking the Sundial bridge and chowin' down with ya'll!

Jurupa Valley FFA - Friends, all you can eat, and fun?! Where else but John's?! Enjoyment level was "high key" through the roof when Joelle and Bre visited Jurupa Valley FFA!

MEMORABLE MOMENTS

Weaverville-Trinity FFA - From the town that brought us authentic Mexican food and genuine students, Joelle and Tim had a blast hangin' with all of you!

Cedarville FFA - Food, fun and volleyball? Bre and Trevor really couldn't ask for "s'more"!

Who can successfully eat 30 scoops of ice cream? Bre, Dani, and Rubidoux FFA, of course...we had a sweet time!

Bakersfield-Golden Valley - Thank you for welcoming Tim & Syd and showing us a "Golden" time!

At Wonderful College Prep Academy, Trevor and Sydnie played paintball, took radish selfies and felt like lifelong friends. Thanks for showing us a "Wonderful" time!

With Upper Lake FFA, three chapters united to help with donations for those affected by the Valley Fire in Middletown. Bre, Dani, and Jo loved seeing the strength in community.



Tim and Danielle enjoyed meeting the entire FFA family at Chino-Don Lugo FFA, including the countless pigs, sheep, and horses on the farm!

Thank you, Salinas FFA, for giving Dani and Jo a night full of laughs and a day full of smiles as we rocked out to High School Musical and Hannah Montana!

The Mighty Mustangs of the Hemet-West Valley FFA Chapter showed us their strength as they worked on their exciting and developing farm!

At Brawley FFA, the people and program are just stellar! Tim and Syd had a jammin' time with these guys!

Kelseyville FFA - Trev and Tim had a blast with you all, thank you for dancing with us!

Middletown FFA - Good pizza, great people, and an even better experience getting to know you! Thank you for teaching Trevor and Tim what it truly means to be #MiddletownStrong!

Madera FFA - Where the farm, heart, and spirit is so large you can't help but feel welcomed! Joelle and Sydnie cannot wait to see members step-up to their opportunities in this chapter!

THROUGHOUT THE STATE

Live Oak FFA, thank you for naming your lizards, "Dani" and "Sydnie", as well as sharing with us your FFAMILY!

Bakersfield FFA - Explosive energy, floral montages, and late night chats! Bakersfield sure knows how to take care of us! Bre and Tim had such an amazing experience!

Bakersfield-Ridgeview FFA surely showed us an American-Ninja worthy time as Dani and Bre conquered the mock-course at a trampoline arena!

Lakeside-El Capitan was full of homemade pizza, puppies, a picture perfect sunrise and personable people! Syd and Tim could not have asked for more.

Corcoran FFA - Yummy food, and even more lovable company! Bre and Joelle thought the enthusiasm level was exciting!

North Salinas FFA showed Joelle and Danielle their awesome pumpkin SAE projects!

FINISH



FULLERTON-SUNNY HILLS FFA Fall Festival

Submitted by Emily Colby

On October 24th, the Sunny Hills FFA Chapter had our annual Fall Festival to help raise funds for our chapter. This event was held on our farm and included many games and

activities. By attending and volunteering to work shifts, members earned FFA participation points. At our festival, we had vendors such as henna tattoos, a craft booth, and a farmers' market where we sold merchandise and fresh produce from our school farm. We offered food that included tri-tip, hot dogs, and different festival foods. Games for the younger children along with activities like pie-eating contests for students were offered. Over 700 people attended this event, including families and school administrators. Overall, the festival was a success, providing a family friendly environment, and resulting in a successful fundraiser for our chapter!



MENIFEE-HERITAGE FFA Operation Gratitude

Submitted by Karla Monroy

This Thanksgiving, the Meniffee-Heritage FFA chapter gave thanks and love to those who may not receive it. For our November meeting, members created personal placemats expressing their gratitude, care, and warmth for the elderly. Not only were FFA members invited, but their family also had the opportunity to participate in creating their own too. Operation Gratitude was a time for students to serve the community and be thankful while bonding with other members, the officer team, family, and advisors. Afterwards, the officer team gladly sent the placemats to a local nursing home where they were used by the elders for their Thanksgiving dinner. Giving is better than receiving and this year our chapter served the community with a recognition of our appreciation. FFA members learned no matter how small the giving is, it is the thought and love put into it that makes it greater. Operation Gratitude was a success!



YUBA CITY-RIVER VALLEY FFA Making Spirits Bright

Submitted by Genesis Becerra

River Valley FFA is a program that looks for ways to do things helpful to the school and community. For the last few years members have donated all the fixings for a Thanksgiving Dinner we then choose needy families from a nearby elementary school to donate the food to. This year we were able to supply over 10 bags of groceries to each of five very lucky families. Our program loves to give to those families that are in

need of a little extra Christmas cheer. This year our members donated Christmas decorations and lights to decorate five Christmas trees. The decorated trees were then delivered to five families in our community that needed a little extra help during the holiday season. Our officers were able to see the smile in children's eyes as they walked up to the front door with a completely decorated tree with lights and all. What a great gift!

TEMPLETON FFA Motivating Freshmen

Submitted by Brent Hill

During the month of November, the Templeton FFA Chapter decided to educate the freshmen in the Agriculture Biology and Introduction to Agriculture Mechanics classes. The FFA Leadership class wanted to incorporate agriculture experiences for these students during Greenhand week. The leadership class took the freshmen classes to the school farm to give them a hands-on approach to agriculture. This involved teaching students how to raise livestock, show livestock, how to properly plant seeds, tractor safety, and how to rope a dummy animal. The freshmen all enjoyed this experience and are excited about agriculture and motivated to get involved in the Templeton FFA program.



{ Continued on page 15 }



RIPON CHRISTIAN FFA Inaugural Ag Day

Submitted by Bailey Silveira

Ripon Christian FFA was chartered in September 2015. On November 13th, the chapter hosted an Ag Day event for all 430 of the K-8 students at Ripon Christian Schools. In the morning, over 20 representatives from the agricultural community gave presentations about different agricultural topics, ranging from aquaculture to almond production. Some presentations, run by our FFA members,

focused on Agricultural Education and the FFA. In the afternoon, kindergarten through 3rd grade had a reading of the book "The Big Red Tractor" by FFA members. Grades 4th and 5th watched a sheep shearing demo. The biggest afternoon hit was the "Ag Olympics" for 6th through 8th graders. Led by FFA members, the middle school students competed in a straw bale relay, sack races, tug-of-war, and other team building games. All in all, Ag Day 2015 was a great success to kick off Ripon Christian FFA!



GALT-LIBERTY RANCH FFA Classes Unite

By Alyssa Snow

Liberty Ranch FFA has united our science, floral, economy and government, and Farm to Fork classes to develop a "farm", in which we plant, harvest, market, price, advertise, and sell different products each week. Our Biology classes plant, transplant, and harvest seedlings for each season using our greenhouse and community garden. Our economy and governments classes research competitor prices to make our products more suitable to the consumers in our community and advertise each week's product in an insert we post on our website. The floral classes craft and sell seasonal floral arrangements, and the Farm to Fork class tests and releases recipes, ways to prepare each item, and cooking tips for our buyers. Some of our top selling products include lettuce, garlic, pumpkin, floral arrangements, and lavender. This farm has integrated the agricultural aspect into our curriculum even more and has allowed us to make a difference in our community by working together.



GRIDLEY FFA Seeds of Hope for Our Community

Submitted by Mikayla Schnepel

Beginning this year, Gridley FFA has started a new tradition, one that gives back to our community, just in time for the holidays! On November 23rd, we held our November

meeting, but with one request from our members, to bring in at least one canned food item, if they could spare. And we were truly astounded with how many cans were brought in! With almost everyone of the approximate 160 members that came to the meeting bringing a few cans, Gridley FFA chapter filled a large shopping cart with canned goods, all the way to the brim! The local food bank was overjoyed to receive such a large donation in time for the holidays. We plan to continue this tradition for many years to come, because we are "planting the seeds of today, for the future of tomorrow", believing these seeds of hope and good deeds will enhance our community's future.



FORTUNA FFA Not Your Average Food Drive

Submitted by Haley Benbow

In early November, 90 members of Fortuna FFA took part in the chapter's annual door-to-door canned food drive. Despite the rainy weather, members hit the streets of Fortuna equipped with shopping carts and asked for donations of canned items to benefit the Fortuna Pantry Shelf. To make things more interesting, we turned this into a friendly competition and offered a prize to the team that brought in the most goods. Thanks to the generous support of the community, we collected a grand total of 462 items in less than thirty minutes! The holiday season is a very busy time for organizations such as the Fortuna Pantry Shelf, so Fortuna FFA was more than happy to contribute to such a great cause. •

COMING SOON...



CALIFORNIA STATE FFA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

ELECTRIFY

APRIL 23-26, 2016 • FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

Thank you to the James G. Boswell Foundation for their continued support through the California FFA Foundation. Their donation provides a \$25 discount per attendee.

• KEYNOTE SPEAKERS •

BRAD MONTAGUE is a writer, director, and father who believes that if kids and grown-ups work together, we can change the world. He loves old movies, burritos, and meowing the words to his favorite songs. As creator of Kid President, he developed the idea after being inspired by a group of young people at GO! Camp, an annual summer program he and his wife run.



BROOKS GIBBS is an author, speaker, and social skills educator. He's spoken to over one-million students, hosted national radio/tv shows, and has been featured as an expert in publications like the Huffington Post, Fox News, and the New York Times. He is an expert at helping student leaders to become emotionally resilient against negative criticism and empowering them to remain positive in the midst of any negative circumstances.



• NATIONAL OFFICER ADDRESSES •

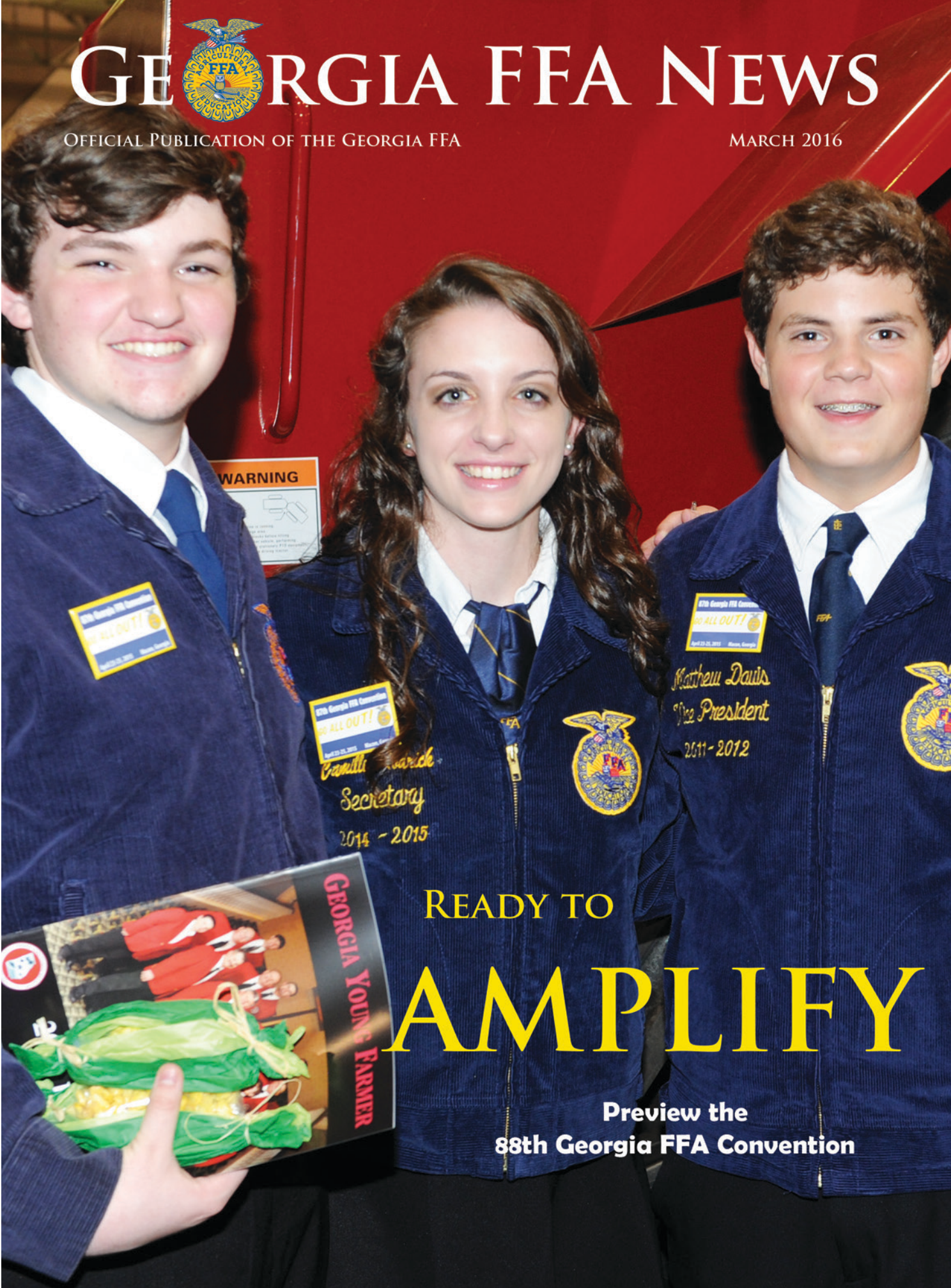
National President, Taylor McNeel and National Secretary, Nick Baker

STATE CONFERENCE APP WILL BE RELEASED IN FEBRUARY

GEORGIA FFA NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GEORGIA FFA

MARCH 2016



WARNING

87th Georgia FFA Convention
GO ALL OUT!
April 23-25, 2015
Macon, Georgia

Erinelli Warwick
Secretary
2014 - 2015

87th Georgia FFA Convention
GO ALL OUT!
April 23-25, 2015
Macon, Georgia

Matthew Davis
Vice President
2011 - 2012

READY TO

AMPLIFY

Preview the
88th Georgia FFA Convention

LAGRANGE AND CALHOUN COUNTY FFA MEMBERS ATTEND GEORGIA ORGANICS CONFERENCE

COLUMBUS, GA -- The LaGrange and Calhoun County FFA chapters represented the Georgia FFA Association at the Georgia Organics conference February 26-27. The two chapters provided 800 heads of organically grown lettuce in exchange for free conference registrations, allowing five people from each chapter to attend the conference at no cost.

The chapters began right after Christmas growing lettuce in biodegradable pots. Agricultural education teachers Jessica Bowden (LaGrange) and Kedrione Harris (Calhoun County) used this opportunity to educate their students about what it means to

primarily because their programs possess the resources to each produce 400 heads of lettuce using organic methods. Using their greenhouses and some bright and helpful students, Bowden and Harris agreed to produce the heads of lettuce and transport them to the conference. All 800 heads of lettuce were given away to conference attendees to take home either for consumption or to be replanted and grown larger.

Both Bowden and Harris found help in their school and community to pull off the task of growing so much lettuce. The local Wal Mart in LaGrange donated nine pallets of organic soil to Bowden and her



19TH ANNUAL
GEORGIA ORGANICS
CONFERENCE & EXPO
FEB. 26-27, 2016
COLUMBUS GEORGIA CONVENTION & TRADE CENTER
COLUMBUS, GA

produce food "organically." Though there are no organic lettuce seeds, the chapters used organic practices to produce the lettuce. They produced the lettuce using no fertilizer, herbicide or pesticide.

"The FFA has had a partnership with Georgia Organics for several years," said Trisha Lastly, South Region Area Horticulture Teacher. "This is a wonderful opportunity for our agriculture teachers and students to showcase the FFA and learn about a facet of agriculture that is growing and important."

Bowden and Harris, and their agricultural education programs, were selected not only because of their proximity to Columbus, but

program to use. It was that sense of community and a larger purpose that Bowden says she and her students enjoyed. "We are so excited to be part of something much bigger than just our school and community," said Bowden.

The Georgia Organics conference is a gathering of more than 1,000 local producers who come together to learn, network, feast and champion organic food and farms. The two-day conference is one of largest sustainable agriculture expos in the South. For more information about Georgia Organics, visit www.georgiaorganics.org.

Story by: Georgia FFA

WHAT'S INSIDE

FFA on display at Georgia Organics conference.....	2
North Oconee FFA member wins National SAE Grant.....	6
Herlong and Gretsche named as State Convention speakers.....	7

Georgia FFA Executive Team



President

Avery Duncan (Franklin County)

Secretary

Ian Bennett (Lowndes County)

Vice Presidents

Faith Gilman (East Jackson)

Andy Kate McCannon (Oconee County)

Lucious Hodges (Peach County)

Mary Kaitlyn Wheeler (East Laurens)

Angel Lewis (Clinch County)

Christen Flowers (Brantley County)

State Advisor

John "Chip" Bridges
Atlanta

Executive Secretary

Ben Lastly
Athens

The Georgia FFA News

Published
Journal
Communications
Franklin, TN
(615) 771-0080

Design & Editing
Georgia FFA
Athens, Georgia
(706) 552-4456
blastly@gaaged.org

ON THE COVER: FFA members visit a tractor display during the Career Show at the 87th Georgia FFA Convention.

www.georgiaffa.org

Twitter @GA_FFA



[Facebook.com/GeorgiaFFA](https://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaFFA)

Instagram @GA_FFA



Want a job? **STUDY FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

There will be **nearly 60,000 openings in agriculture and food industries** annually over the next five years, and yet there are only about 35,000 college graduates to fill them, according to the USDA.



Want a great education?



STUDY AT UGA

Graduates from CAES have the highest placement into graduate and professional schools and the **third highest starting salaries of UGA's colleges.**

SUCCESS GROWS HERE.



THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
**COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL &
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES**

discover@uga.edu • students.caes.uga.edu

 CAESstudents

 @ugaCAESstudents

 UgaCAESstudents

On April 28-30, 2016, more than 5,000
Georgia FFA members are going to...



State

Conway McNeil

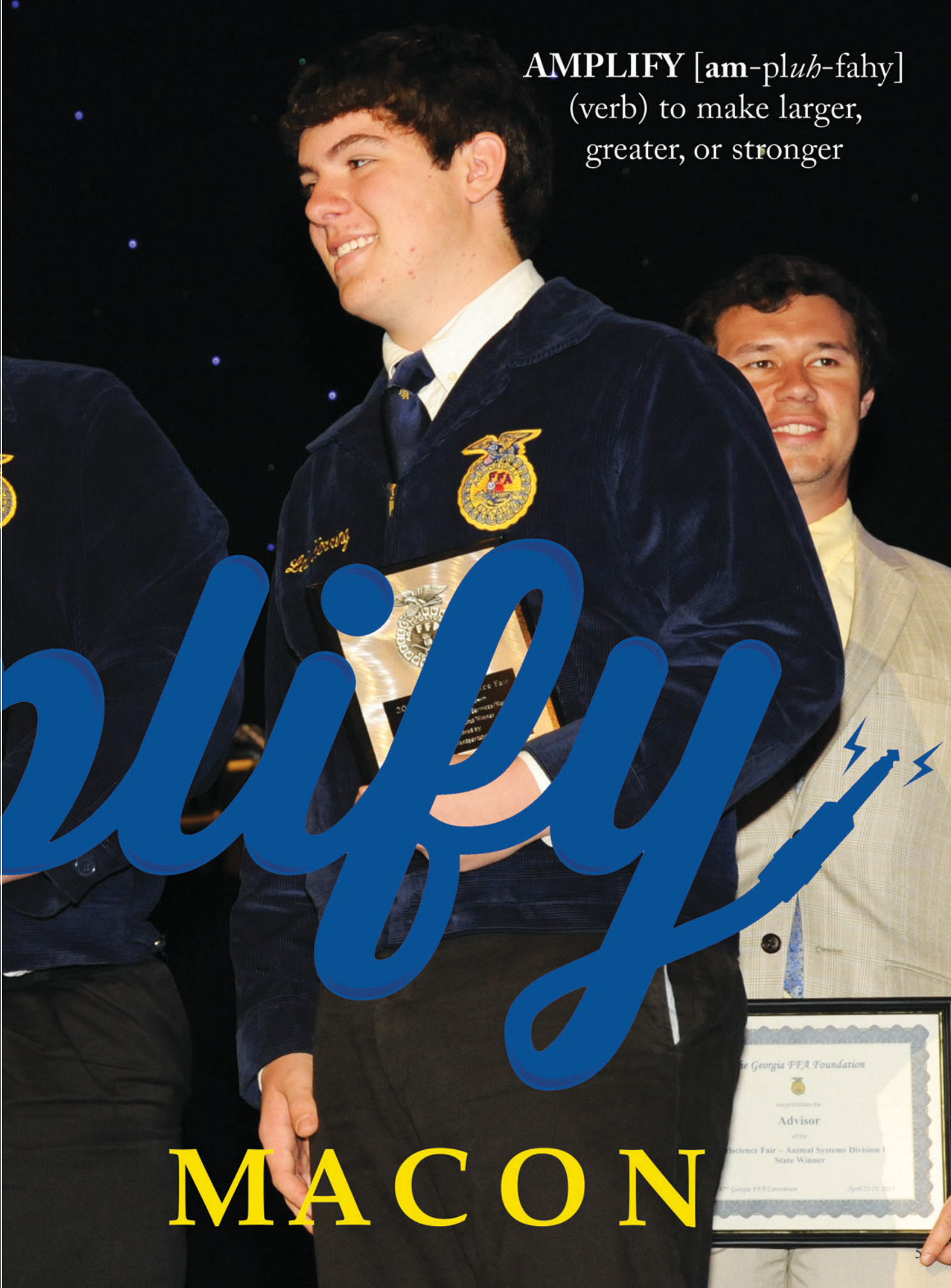


88th Georgia FFA Convention

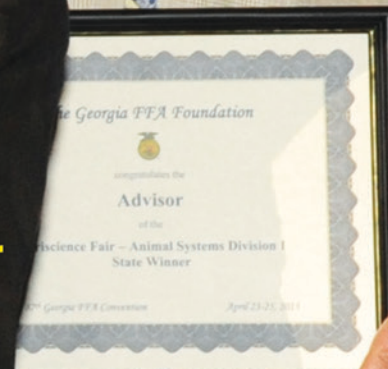
For information about registration, speakers, schedule, Living to Serve opportunities, and all other parts of the convention, log on to www.georgiaffa.org, select FFA and go to the State Convention page.

#GAFFA2016

AMPLIFY [am-pluh-fahy]
(verb) to make larger,
greater, or stronger



MACON



A HONEY OF A DEAL

NORTH OCONEE FFA MEMBER EARNS A NATIONAL GRANT TO GROW HIS SAE

William “Gray” Miller, a member of the North Oconee FFA chapter, was awarded a \$1,000 SAE grant through the National FFA Organization. Miller, whose grant is sponsored by Bayer Cropscience, is the only Georgian to receive a national SAE grant in 2015.

Miller is an eleventh grader at North Oconee High School. His agricultural education teacher and FFA advisor is Mr. Tim Griffith, and his Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) is bee keeping. With eight hives, Miller’s bee operation produced more than 150 pounds of honey in 2015. As part of the National FFA Organization’s SAE grant application through the MyFFA online system, Miller was asked to detail his plan for how he would use the \$1,000 to grow his SAE. Miller says his plan is to use the money to purchase three more complete hives, a nucleus hive and two additional queens.

“For the past couple of years, the money that I’ve made selling honey has been used to repay my parents for the upfront loan they provided that allowed me to get established in the bee keeping business,” Miller said. “The funds from this grant will get me out of debt more quickly, allowing me to start putting my income from honey sales in my own bank account. My goal is for these bees to help me pay for college.”



The purchase of three complete hives will include inner covers, honey supers, queen excluders, hive bodies, bottom boards, hive tops, boxes and frames.

Bee keeping began as a hobby

for Miller to spend time with his grandmother when he was very young. By the time he reached the ninth grade and enrolled in his first agricultural education class, Miller had acquired his grandmother’s bee keeping material, and borrowed money from his

parents to get his new operation off the ground. Thanks to efficient production practices, Miller has grown his operation by splitting his hives and borrowing money to purchase more. His FFA advisor says that Miller’s determination is a key to his success.



Gray Miller collects honey from his hives once a year, and expects to produce 300 pounds of honey in 2016.

“Gray has a real passion for beekeeping,” said Griffith. “He has used that passion to develop a quality SAE program that has allowed him a chance to make contacts in our community and throughout the beekeeping industry.”

To generate income, Miller sells honey produced in his hives. His operation is named *Hidden Lake Honey*, and is a certified Georgia Grown member. A one pound jar of *Hidden Lake Honey* sells for ten dollars. Miller says he expects his honey production

to nearly double in 2016 due to the acquisition of new hives and the successful splitting of his mature hives. Miller is also learning entrepreneurial practices, stating that he developed a new label for his honey jars that debuted in 2015.

Miller, the son of Allen and Donna Miller, is in his third year as an FFA member. He has participated in the Wildlife Management and Forestry career development events, has served as member of his chapter’s Hunger Simulation Dinner committee, and is looking forward to attending the state FFA convention and Summer Leadership Camp this year. After graduation, Miller says that he plans to attend college and pursue a career as a physician’s assistant.

National FFA awarded 138 SAE grants in 2015, providing nearly \$140,000 to FFA members who are growing successful SAEs. For more information about SAE grants visit www.ffa.org.



Story by: Georgia FFA
Photos by: Miller family

MEET THE SPEAKERS OF THE 88TH GEORGIA FFA CONVENTION

JANE HERLONG

Sirius XM , best-selling author and professional singer, Jane Herlong, delivers a simple message...work smart, laugh often and live your dream! Combining humor and truth, Jane uses comedy, original Southern stories and singing to inspire and entertain audiences around the world. Jane and her family live in So



Jane Herlong is the convention kickoff speaker, and will address the audience at the opening session on Thursday, April 28, at 7:00 p.m. Learn more about Jane at www.janeherlong.com.

ABBAY GRETSCH

Athens Christian FFA member Abbey Gretsch is the 16th Georgian to serve as a National FFA Officer. Abbey was elected back in October, and is taking a one year leave of absence from the University of Georgia to travel more than 100,000 miles sharing the message of the FFA. Abbey served as State FFA Vice President in 2013-2014; competed in the Ag Communications and Extemporaneous Speaking CDEs; and developed a strong beef cattle SAE.



Abbey will speak at the 4th session on Friday, April 29, at 2:30 p.m.

**Online registration opens
March 1st - 7:00 a.m.**

Find details at
www.georgiaSLC.org
on *Teachers* tab

**Leaders In Training
program open for 11th &
12th graders who have
attended SLC at least 2
years!**

Find details at
www.georgiaSLC.org
on *Students* tab

Georgia FFA-FCCLA Summer Leadership Camp

Teachers	Students	Staff	Facility	Contact
				
			SLC	
				
				

Week 1: May 23-27

Week 2: May 30 -June 3

Week 3: June 6-10

Week 4: June 13-17

Week 5: June 20 - 24

Week 6: June 27 - July 1

www.georgiaSLC.org



Add Some ABAC Green to your Blue & Gold

At Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, two of our greatest passions are Agriculture and Students. ABAC is known for providing students with a quality education that allows them to excel both in the classroom and in the field of Agriculture. Our engaging professors offer extensive industry knowledge, provide countless resources and internships, and send students out proudly wearing the ABAC name.

www.abac.edu



ABRAHAM BALDWIN
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
Tifton, Ga.



@abac_college



1908abac



@abac_college



TheABACStallion



ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION FFA

Spring 2016



ILLINOIS FFA

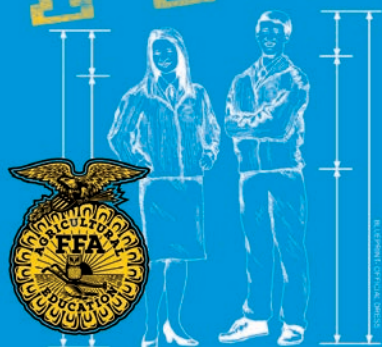


Table of Contents

PAGE B-C: **Career Development
Event Winners**

PAGE D-E: **FFA Week 2016**

PAGE F: **Call to Convention**

PAGE G: **Illinois FFA Alumni
Scholarship Winners**

PAGE H: **Alumni Award Winners**

Visit us at www.illinoisffa.org

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

AG SALES

In the Ag Sales Career Development Event, 22 schools, 22 teams and 88 individuals competed.

Congratulations to the top three teams and top 10 individuals who competed in this year's contest!



Teams

Rank	School	Score
1st Place	Olney	824
2nd Place	Paxton-Buckley-Loda	816
3rd Place	Chicago Ag Sciences High School	814

Individuals

Rank	Student	School	Score
1st Place	Kendra Snyder	Lena-Winslow	184
2nd Place	Trevor Maiers	Payson	184
3rd Place	Samantha Brandtonies	Chicago Ag Sciences High School	183
4th Place	Austin Potter	Paxton-Buckley-Loda	183
5th Place	Nathan Somers	Prairie Central	183
6th Place	Lexi Martinez	Chicago Ag Sciences High School	182
7th Place	Daine Dupree	Chicago Ag Sciences High School	181
8th Place	Megan Reed	Cambridge	181
9th Place	Hope Enck	Lena-Winslow	181
10th Place	Peyton McClure	Paxton-Buckley-Loda	180



AGRONOMY

In the Agronomy Career Development Event, 40 schools, 37 teams and 148 individuals competed.

Congratulations to the top three teams and top 10 individuals who competed in this year's contest!

Teams

Rank	School	Score
1st Place	Paxton-Buckley-Loda	925
2nd Place	Iroquois West	922
3rd Place	Olney	910.5

Individuals

Rank	Individual	School	Score
1st Place	Matthew Runyon	Olney	337.5
2nd Place	Macy Tippie	Iroquois West	320
3rd Place	Jakob Miles	Paxton-Buckley-Loda	318
4th Place	Wesley Tennant	Orion	317
5th Place	Michael Curry	Paxton-Buckley-Loda	314
6th Place	Noah Wilwohl	Iroquois West	311
7th Place	Logan Miller	Prairie Central	308.5
8th Place	Mitch Wettstein	Eureka	307
9th Place	Amy Johnson	Galva	302
10th Place	Lauren Hawes	Galva	295



EVENT *Winners!*

DAIRY FOODS

In the Dairy Foods Career Development Event, 29 schools, 23 teams and 115 individuals competed.

Congratulations to the top three teams and top 10 individuals who competed in this year's contest!

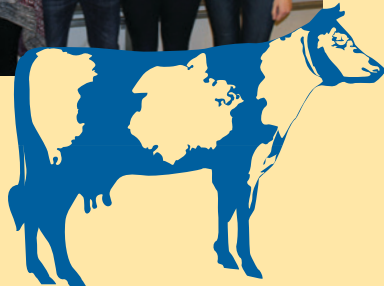


Teams

Rank	School	Score
1st Place	Prairie Central	130.5
2nd Place	Seneca	175
3rd Place	Unity	184

Individuals

Rank	Individual	School	Score
1st Place	Kari Slagel	Prairie Central	37
2nd Place	Megan Ifft	Prairie Central	44.5
3rd Place	Samantha Degraaf	Seneca	48
4th Place	Loretta Knapp	Prairie Central	49
5th Place	Logan Pyles	Midland	52
6th Place	Calli Robinson	Unity	54
7th Place	Kylie Miller	Prairie Central	55
8th Place	Emily Denekas	Eastland	55.5
9th Place	Tyson Stork	Prairie Central	56.5
10th Place	Carson Robinson	Unity	57



MEATS

In the Meats Career Development Event, 24 schools, 23 teams and 99 individuals competed.

Congratulations to the top three teams and top 10 individuals who competed in this year's contest!

Teams

Rank	School	Score
1st Place	Prairie Central	1662
2nd Place	Seneca	1587
3rd Place	Clifton Central	1554

Individuals

Rank	Individual	School	Score
1st Place	Jamie Goslin	Seneca	546
2nd Place	Caitlyn Ifft	Prairie Central	542
3rd Place	Trenton Edelman	Prairie Central	538
4th Place	Mitchell Lanz	Prairie Central	532
5th Place	Jake Leman	Prairie Central	522
6th Place	Logan Meier	Clifton Central	521
7th Place	Tony Dupuis	Clifton Central	511
8th Place	Colleen Kinsella	Seneca	511
9th Place	Charlie Jenkins	Woodland	510
10th Place	Caroline Downey	Midland	495



FFA Week 2016

How many of us have a favorite holiday? Some of us may really enjoy Christmas and Thanksgiving, while others may enjoy Halloween or Easter. These holidays all celebrate different things, but do have one similarity. All of these holidays take place on one day. Where am I going with this, you may ask? Well, it all has to do with my favorite holiday. My favorite holiday is FFA Week! As FFA members, we don't get just one day for our holiday. We get an entire week!

FFA Week will take place from February 20-27, 2016. This will actually be the 68th anniversary of National FFA Week. FFA chapters from all across the nation will be conducting various events and activities to celebrate National FFA Week and BUILD our organization.

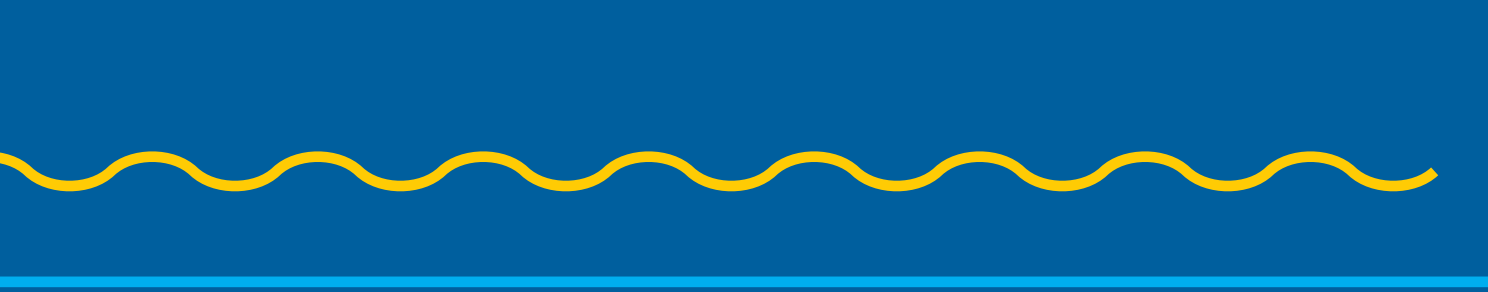
Connor, Kade, Susie, Jordan and I challenge everyone to be a part of the National FFA Week celebration. The five of us major state officers will be available all through FFA Week to present workshops. Our goal is to help BUILD our state FFA association alongside all chapters and members in our great state.

Remember, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Halloween and Easter only get one day, but we get an entire week – seven days – for FFA Week! Take action and use all of those days to BUILD our organization.

BUILD, Grow and Love Always,

Kolton Kimpling





CALL TO *Convention*



ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

It's coming, and it will be here before we know it!

What am I referring to, you may ask? Well, the 88th Annual Illinois FFA State Convention of course! This is the official announcement, and the first invitation for State Convention. Connor, Kolton, Susie, Jordan and I have been working diligently to BUILD this year's convention. We'll kick convention off on Tuesday, June 14th, and continue through Thursday, June 16th. Illinois FFA has set our state theme as BUILD for 2016, and I assure you that we are BUILDing three energy-packed and exciting days for this year's convention.

Members visiting the FFA Convention Career Show and attending workshops will meet with colleges and business leaders in an effort to learn of new opportunities and programs that will BUILD them up and help prepare them for careers beyond high school.



Connor, Kolton, Susie, Jordan and I are continuing to BUILD the 88th Illinois FFA Convention and are working hard to make sure we recognize all the successful members, chapters and supporters of this great State Association. Start planning now to attend all six sessions so you can hear our FFA Band and Chorus, keynote speakers such as National FFA Secretary, Nick Baker, FFA Talent, retiring addresses from your State FFA Officers, and one of the most important BUILDing blocks of Convention and our state association, the election of the new 2016-2017 Major State FFA Officer Team.

All FFA members should BUILD up their excitement and be ready to have a great time. Besides the energetic sessions, FFA members can look forward to the annual State Convention Dance and Ice Cream Social on Tuesday evening following the second general session. On Wednesday evening, there will be an exciting event for all FFA members to attend. Mark Hood, past Illinois FFA Section 8 President and contestant on the hit T.V. show *The Voice*, will be joining all FFA members for a thrilling concert.

This year we look forward to presenting new opportunities that have never been available before and will be sure to BUILD our organization. Where can you hear first about these new experiences? Well, it isn't very hard! Simply follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to catch the news on exactly what to expect at the 88th Annual Illinois FFA State Convention.

As you attend Lincoln's hometown, be sure to check out all the historical sites, delicious restaurants and the true BUILDing blocks of this state's capital. My fellow officers and I look forward to seeing you there in a sea of blue corduroy!

Sincerely,

Kade Hill, President – Illinois Association FFA – 2015-2016



2015-16 ILLINOIS FFA SCHOLARSHIP *Winners*

2015 FFA Leadership Camp

Karly Bruntjen, Lincolnwood
Kendall Dodson, Nashville
Jacqueline Ishmael, Havana
Brandon Livingston, Bushnell-Prairie City
Rebecca Mugrage, Cisne
Zach Price, Iroquois West
Carlie Schmidt, New Berlin
Molly Walker, Olney

Antonio Coit-Kirk, Hartsburg-Emden
Gavin Edwards, Heyworth
Kevin Koch, Okawville
Devin McGinnis, Farmington
Ethan Plote, Tri-County
Sydney Riden, West Prairie
Lucille Smith, Wayne City
Adam Wolfe, Clifton Central

Jacob Dobbels, Cambridge
Justin Huff, Mt. Vernon
Austin Kregel, Cissna Park
Jack Mings, Eldorado
Trent Ponder, Tuscola
Meghan Scheib, Serena
Brittany Twidwell, Southeastern

2015 Chapter Basket Winners – Camp Scholarships

Bailey Howard, ROWVA
Dylan Payne, Milford
Logan Vandenburg, Seneca

Jontae McCleery, Bushnell-Prairie City
Chaitlyn Stanley, Eldorado
Rose Wilschetz, Calhoun

Emma Moore, Clinton
Mika Taylor, Sandoval
Brenden Young, Waterloo

2016 “212” Conference

Karah Anker, Manteno
Penny Flood, Cumberland
Greg Harden, New Berlin
Alex Johannes, Nashville
Kaleb Millburg, Lincolnwood
Logan Quance, Marion
Dylan Terven, Unity
Kaylee Winegarner, Sandoval

Katherine Davis, Red Bud
Chasidy Greenwalt, Wayne City
Brooklyn Hazel, Edwards County
Julia Konopasek, Cisne
Seth Mitchell, Olney
Austin Reed, Cambridge
Karah Thomas, Farmington
Jazmin Wingert, Pearl City

Hannah Davison, West Prairie
Alyssa Hails, Bluford
Tayler Issler, Johnston City
Hannah Liske, Okawville
Juhle Prange, Trico
Paige Sargeant, Bushnell-Prairie City
Kristen VanDeVelde, Galva

2016 Washington Leadership Conference

Lilah Bobinski, Midland
Mikayla Busby, Monticello
Kendall Dodson, Nashville
Koby Gooden, West Prairie
Taylor Harvey, Clinton
Kaitlyn Kane, Monmouth-Roseville
Kristen Kurtz, St. Joseph-Ogden
Kendall Nelson, Newark
Mika Taylor, Sandoval
Emily Waddell, Midwest Ctrl

Josie Brockett, Cumberland
Owen Curry, AlWood
Aaron Duncan, Marion
Brianna Gorham, Rockridge
Samantha Hatfield, Shelbyville
David Kloppe, New Berlin
Nicole Laskowski, Marissa
Lucille Smith, Wayne City
Macy Tippie, Iroquois West
Emily Woods, Seneca

Samantha Brookman, Cisne
Jacob Dobbels, Cambridge
Claire Eggerman, Carlyle
Laurie Gronewold, Unity
Connor Kaeb, Cissna Park
Noah Kueker, Mt. Vernon
Victoria Medernach, LeRoy
Katie Stenger, Farmington
Brittany Twidwell, Southeastern



2016 ALUMNI AWARDS

Outstanding Member

James Shelby, Mt. Vernon FFA Alumni

Outstanding Affiliate

Winner: Gold: Mount Vernon FFA Alumni

Gold: Waterloo FFA Alumni

Silver: Bushnell Prairie-City FFA Alumni

Bronze: Seneca FFA Alumni

Bronze: Stockton FFA Alumni

Newly Chartered Affiliates

Camp Point Central FFA Alumni

Carrollton FFA Alumni

Elmwood FFA Alumni

Reactivated - DeKalb FFA Alumni

Largest Affiliate

Winner: Geneseo FFA Alumni (195)

Waterloo FFA Alumni (181)

Heartland (Normal) FFA Alumni (140)

Tri-Point FFA Alumni (139)

Taylorville FFA Alumni (136)

Most New Life Members

New Berlin FFA Alumni (10)

Mt. Vernon FFA Alumni (7)

Taylorville FFA Alumni (7)

Amboy FFA Alumni (6)

Pontiac FFA Alumni (5)

Milford FFA Alumni (5)

Most New Members

WINNER: Geneseo FFA Alumni (115)

Paxton-Buckley-Loda FFA Alumni (64)

Lincolnwood FFA Alumni (62)

Shiloh FFA Alumni (48)

Ottawa FFA Alumni (44)

One for One Affiliates

(The Alumni matches or is greater than the FFA Chapter)

Abingdon-Avon FFA Alumni

Astoria FFA Alumni

Bluffs FFA Alumni

Bushnell-Prairie City FFA Alumni

Calhoun FFA Alumni

Cambridge FFA Alumni

Central (Burlington) FFA Alumni

Chrisman-Scotland FFA Alumni

Cissna Park FFA Alumni

Clinton FFA Alumni

Eldorado FFA Alumni

Freeburg FFA Alumni

Geneseo FFA Alumni

Genoa-Kingston FFA Alumni

Hamilton County FFA Alumni

Hartsburg-Emden FFA Alumni

Havana FFA Alumni

Heartland (Normal) FFA Alumni

Kansas FFA Alumni

Kewanee FFA Alumni

LeRoy FFA Alumni

Lincoln FFA Alumni

Lincolnwood FFA Alumni

Marengo FFA Alumni

Mendota FFA Alumni

Monmouth (Roseville) FFA Alumni

New Berlin FFA Alumni

Newark FFA Alumni

Oakwood FFA Alumni

Ottawa FFA Alumni

Paxton-Buckley-Loda FFA Alumni

Pecatonica FFA Alumni

Peotone FFA Alumni

Pinckneyville FFA Alumni

Red Bud FFA Alumni

River Valley FFA Alumni

Shiloh FFA Alumni

Staunton FFA Alumni

Stockton FFA Alumni

Sycamore FFA Alumni

Tri-County FFA Alumni

Tri-Point FFA Alumni

Waterloo FFA Alumni

Wayne City FFA Alumni

Williamsfield FFA Alumni

Williamsville FFA Alumni

Woodland FFA Alumni

**Alumni Membership
Rosters due
March 1, 2016**

Alumni's in the Affiliate Fee Program

Depending on your Alumni the payment would be \$150 for affiliates with under 25 lifetime members, or \$50 for ones with 25 or more lifetime members. If your "annual" members would like the Horizon's Magazine, then please include \$10 per person (lifetime members get this magazine for free). Please email the Roster & Volunteer Hours/Officer's List to Patti Davis at pdavis@illinoisffa.org. Please note that the roster can have anyone on it - they do not have to be paying members with your local affiliate.

Alumni's Collecting Annual Dues

For the Alumni's that do not want to be in the Affiliate Fee Program, please collect annual dues of \$15 (\$10 National FFA Alumni & \$5 IL FFA Alumni), Horizon's Magazine \$2.50. Please email the roster and Officer's List/Volunteer Hours to Patti Davis pdavis@illinoisffa.org.

Lifetime Membership Dues

\$210 (\$150 National FFA Alumni, \$10 Processing Fee & \$50 Illinois FFA Alumni Dues)

Active Alumni's

Be sure and check your Tax Exempt status with the IRS. If you do not renew your tax exempt status yearly, you can lose your status. So please contact the IRS.

If any questions, please contact Patti Davis at pdavis@illinoisffa.org.



THE IMPACT

INDIANA FFA NEWS INDIANA FFA NEWS INDIANA FFA NEWS INDIANA FFA NEWS



American Degree recipients from Indiana during the 88th National FFA Convention in Louisville, KY.

SPRING 2016

FROM TRAFALGAR

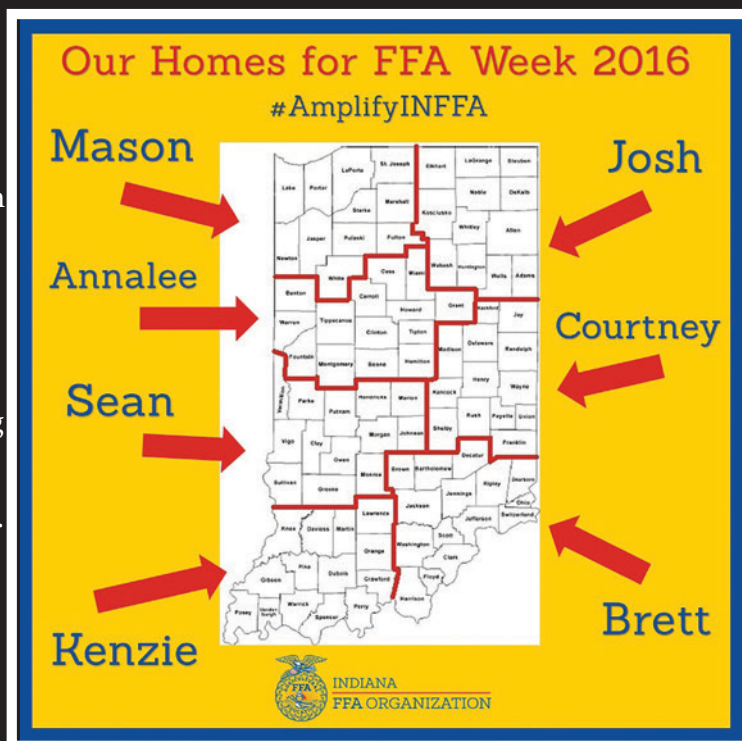
By JOSHUA CALHOUN

There is always that one time a year where snow has fallen, buildings are decorated, and people come together to celebrate. No I am not talking about Christmas, but rather something a bit more exhilarating, National FFA Week!

National FFA Week first started as a day in 1948 during the week of George Washington's birthday because his legacy as an agriculturalist and farmer. The tradition has grown to be a weeklong event that encompasses February 22, George Washington's birthday. The purpose of National FFA week is to educate, advocate, and have fun!

Right here in the great state of Indiana, the state officers have the opportunity to do such as we travel the state. When deciding where to go, our team tried to pick places much different than where we are from. Kenzie, Sean, Courtney, and Brett having grown up in northern Indiana will be going to the areas of south western, west central, east central, and south eastern Indiana respectively. Likewise, for Annalee, Mason, and I having grown up in the best part of the state, will be venturing to north central, north western, and north eastern Indiana respectively.

I hope that everyone is as excited as I am when it comes to FFA week! Each chapter around the state celebrates in a variety of different ways, yet all celebrating the same things; premier leadership, personal growth, and career success. I can remember my favorite FFA week tradition was playing the Hope FFA county rivals the Columbus FFA chapter in our annual FFA basketball game! So no matter what your traditions are, my teammates and I hope you make your 2016 FFA Week celebrations one to remember forever.



Ethan Bailey



Chapter: Norwell

Favorite CDE: Freshman Creed Speaking

SAE(s): Beef Production and Natural Resources Management

FFA has taught me: "to stretch outside my comfort zone. It has helped me to meet new people and explore different areas that I didn't know I was skilled in."

Brandi Henderson



Chapter: Northwood

Favorite CDE: Livestock Judging

FFA has taught me: "to become a better leader and make wiser choices in leading those who look up to me."

Favorite Quote: "It's not about being the best. It's about being better than you were yesterday."

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

OUR MEMBERS MAKE US SHINE!

BY KENZIE KRETZMEIER

Holly Lehe



Chapter: Tri-County

FFA has taught me: "that there is nothing wrong with failing; in fact, it's a necessary teaching tool. What matters is how you change your actions in response to that failure."

Favorite CDE: Vet Science

Activities Outside of FFA: 4-H, SADD, BPA, Band, Horse Bowl and Hippology

Travis Fortune



Chapter: Boonville

Favorite CDE: Animal Science Demonstration

SAE: Equine Science Entrepreneurship

Activities outside of FFA: 4-H, AQHA, American Boar Goat Association, Warrick Saddle Club



SEAN HARRINGTON

State Treasurer

BY MASON GORDON

GET THE FACTS

Birthday: September 5th, 1996
Parents: Mike and Darla Harrington
Siblings: Ryan and Matthew
Hometown: Remington, IN
FFA Chapter: Tri-County
Advisors: Travis Scherer and Ashley Steuer
Favorite Food: Spaghetti
Favorite Movie: Kingsman
Favorite Sport: Track
Favorite Animal: Bald Eagle
Favorite Color: Green
Favorite Music: Anything and Everything
Favorite Pastime: Editing Wikipedia

SEAN'S TIMELINE

Freshman Year:

Soils Evaluation
Crops Evaluation
National Agriscience Fair

Sophomore Year:

Natural Resources Demonstration
Agribusiness Management
Dairy Foods Evaluation

Junior Year:

Multimedia Scrapbook
National Marketing
National Agriscience Fair

Senior Year:

Leadership Ambassador
Job Interview
Extemporaneous Speaking
Chapter Meeting

FUTURE PLANS

Attend Indiana University to study Nonprofit Management.

THE TEAM VOTED SEAN...

Most likely to be Hangry.

"I have had the honor to call Sean Harrington my friend for over a decade. In all of our years together, I still don't think I've ever heard such passion and satisfaction in his voice than when he is talking about FFA and in particular, camps. Over the years, it has been highly gratifying to watch him grow and succeed in the organization. Now, while my FFA career has ended, it is a pleasure for me to see him be able to continue sharing his infectious love for FFA with students and FFA members across Indiana as a state officer."

Josie Douglas, friend

"Sean is the perfect example of the power of the FFA Organization. He was not your typical FFA member from a farm background. Through encouragement of a friend and his first CDE experience he began a journey that built a lifetime of experiences and friendships. His passion for FFA led to a new found passion for agriculture and farming. Even though he is going to that other university, I know his future career will be advocating for agriculture and FFA." Mr. Travis Scherer, Advisor

HELENA CHEMICAL COMPANY



Helena Chemical Company has been a long time sponsor of the future of agriculture in Indiana, but this past fall, they went above and beyond for Indiana FFA! Thanks to the support of Mr. Doug Goff, North Central Division Manager, the Leadership Center is now home to canvases that highlight year round activities that take place at the center! The in kind donation totaled more than \$5,000! Next time you're at the Indiana FFA Leadership Center, check out the beautiful canvases!



"The canvases focus on people and learning. We want the canvases to attract more members and participants to the Indiana FFA Leadership Center. It felt like a valuable donation from Helena."

- Doug Goff, Helena Chemical

"I think the canvases are awesome! They really showcase all that goes on at the Leadership Center and make it feel even more like home. I think the best part is that when people walk, they get to see all the fun that is offered at the center."

- Sophi Shultz, Woodlan FFA Member

SPONSOR SHOUTOUT

BY BRETT ROBERTS

INDIANA CORN MARKETING COUNCIL

The Indiana Corn Marketing Council is a proud sponsor of Indiana FFA. They not only believe in FFA members, but those who teach agriculture across the state. This past fall, the Indiana Corn Marketing Council sponsored a teacher inservice, in conjunction with Purdue University Ag and Biological Engineering Department. This training provided agriculture and science educators from around the state to travel to the Leadership Center and incorporate more alternative fuels based hands-on learning in their classrooms.



Why is it important for the ICMC to support agricultural education?

"With today's youth being even more removed from the farm, it's important to provide the best information we can, so that farmers can continue working hard to provide the food, fiber, and fuel needed for our growing world. ICMC is dedicated to supporting agricultural education programs and FFA so that more teachers and students have the opportunity to become exposed to what our corn farmers are doing every day. This teacher inservice is the perfect opportunity to reach Ag and Science teachers with the messages important to corn farmers and today's agricultural industry. Our hope is that those teachers use the tools provided to pass on important science techniques and ag resources to their students."

- Hannah Vorsilak, Director of Education and Training; Indiana Corn Marketing Council.



JOSHUA'S TIMELINE

Freshman Year:

Greenhand Degree

Sophomore Year:

Chapter Degree

1st Place District Poultry

Production Proficiency

Junior Year:

Hoosier Degree

Chapter Student Advisor

Senior Year:

Chapter Reporter

1st Place District Job Interview

3rd Place District Animal Science Demo

Bronze State Poultry Production Proficiency

JOSHUA CALHOUN

State Sentinel

BY MASON GORDON

GET THE FACTS

Birthday: December 27th, 1995

Parents: Mandi Calhoun

Larry and Nicci Calhoun

Siblings: Caleb, Dane, and Bryce

Hometown: Hope, IN

FFA Chapter: Hope

Advisors: Arnold Ellison, Sara Rapp,
and Aleesa Dickerson

Favorite Food: BBQ Chicken Pasta

Favorite Movie: Perks of Being a Wallflower

Favorite Sport: Soccer

Favorite Animal: Ducks

Favorite Color: Navy Blue

Favorite Music: Anything with a Beat

FUTURE PLANS

Return to Purdue University to finish a degree in Agricultural Education.

THE TEAM VOTED JOSHUA...

Most likely to organize a room for fun

"Josh is the kind of person who infects his environment with his passion and drive for the Indiana FFA association and agricultural education. He has a pay it forward attitude and firmly believes that it is his duty to assist younger members as his mentors assisted him. He is destined for greatness and I know that he will exceed any expectation set before him. It has been an honor to be his advisor." Aleesa Dickerson, Advisor

"I've been fortunate enough to get to know Josh more when he was at Purdue University with me last year. We bonded over our love of agriculture, FFA and of course teaching. Josh is one of the most passionate people I know and truly cares about the people in his life. I'm glad I've got to watch him grow as a person, friend and as a great State Officer. Your Purdue Ag Ed family is proud of all you've done, we miss you and Boiler Up!"

Cameron Frazier, Friend



STATIONED BY THE OWL

ADVISOR SPOTLIGHT

BY ANNALEE WITTE

QUICK FACTS

1. Has been in education for 38 years.
2. He sees 141 students every day grades 7-12 with 98 of those students as FFA members.
3. Favorite Quote: "Plan your work and work your plan". He preaches this to his students when planning out activities and student projects. He tells his students they are guaranteed to be successful if they follow this simple rule.
4. His two biggest accomplishments are advising Indiana's first female "State Star Farmer", and advising a "National Star Farmer of America". Both recognitions took years of building trust and relationships.

Mr. Rod McKee

WOODLAN FFA

"I like that he's always there to talk to. He's very helpful. Without him, I wouldn't have been able to fill out my Hoosier degree. I like that he does whatever he can to help us excel at whatever we do in FFA."

– Paige Stutzman

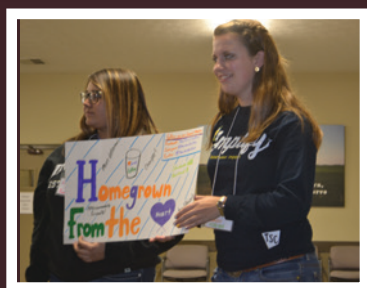
"Mr. McKee became the advisor at Woodlan my freshman year. He is the best advisor I have ever had. He does an excellent job of encouraging members to participate in leadership contests and events. However, he has quirks, for instance, every time we go on a trip in the mini bus he purposely hits a curb for good luck."

– Ally Knepp



HUNGER FOR INNOVATION

BY COURTNEY ADAMS



DID YOU KNOW THAT
1 IN 6 CHILDREN IN
INDIANA FACE FOOD
INSECURITY?

WHAT ABOUT THE FACT THAT
FOOD INSECURITY IS AN ISSUE FOR
ONE IN SEVEN AMERICANS?

Food insecurity is an issue that is everywhere, but many of us don't realize it. With the realization of this issue, the Hunger for Innovation project was born. This project is an opportunity for FFA members who might have a passion for innovation.

ARE YOU AN INVENTOR WHO IS PASSIONATE
ABOUT MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF
HUNGRY HOOSIERS? KEEP YOUR CALENDARS
CLEAR ON APRIL 9TH-10TH.

Before April, gather a team together and begin researching food insecurity and current ways used to fight it. When the teams arrive, they will try to solve tasks related to hunger. You never know, your team might be the one that makes progress in ending food insecurities. If you have a Hunger for Innovation, follow @hungerforinnovation on Instagram and be on the lookout for more information.



STATE CHORUS, BAND, AND TALENT

BY COURTNEY ADAMS

CALLING ALL FFA MEMBERS!

Do you play an instrument?
Is singing something you love to do?
Can you maybe even do both?



If the answer to any of these questions is yes, FFA has the perfect opportunity for you! If you play an instrument, the FFA state band might be up your alley. The State Band President, Brooke Meadows, said it best: "In the FFA State Band, you get to meet members from all over the state who have something in common with you, and you get to work together to create awesome music!"



If singing is where your passion lies, you might want to look into the FFA State Chorus. And if you like to do both, or if you're more of a solo act, the Talent might be more for you. Regardless of where your passion lies, FFA has an opportunity to



fulfill it. State Band, Chorus, and even Talent don't only take place at State Convention. They can provide you with opportunities in the years after you join. Take the State Chorus for example.

On December 19th, they went caroling at the Indianapolis Zoo! If State Band, Chorus, or Talent is of interest to you, ask your advisor for more information.



EXCITING STATE CONVENTION OPPORTUNITIES

MARKETING CDE

BY SEAN HARRINGTON

One of the most common questions any FFA member gets asked is, "What's your favorite contest?" My favorite career development event, without a doubt, is the Marketing Plan CDE.

Sadly, I would consider it to be one of the most underappreciated Career Development Events out there. The best way to explain it is to break it down into three main parts.

1. Your business – Before you can even think about the fancy new marketing techniques you want to put to the test, you have to select a business or product to market. You're required to select a real life agricultural product or business to create a marketing plan for, with the owner's permission of course.
2. Your marketing plan – Once you know what you're going to market, it's time to get that plan down on paper. Everything from advantages you have over your competitors to a feasible 4 year budget needs to be worked out.
3. Your presentation – My personal favorite! You've done the hard work, it's time for Shark Tank, FFA style! You get to present all of your hard work for a panel of judges, just like a real life marketing firm would present for their clients.

I can't emphasize enough how much I learned from my experience in the Marketing Plan CDE. If you're interested, Marketing is a statewide competition that takes place the Monday before state convention. Look out for registration materials in the coming months!

70th ANNIVERSARY
INDIANA RURAL SAFETY & HEALTH COUNCIL

Helping make rural Indiana safer for 70 years.
The Indiana Rural Safety and Health Council has been fighting to make Indiana agricultural safer for 70 years. Each year, an estimated one out of every nine Indiana farm families experiences an injury while farming. The council's goal is to promote a safer and healthier industry. Working with groups such as 4-H, FFA, Indiana Farm Bureau and Purdue's Agricultural Safety and Health Program, the council has had a significant impact on reducing the number of agricultural injuries in Indiana.

Join us today!
Indiana Rural Safety & Health Council
www.farmsafety.org

The Michigan FFA Creed



Spring 2016



480 Wilson Road | Room 108
East Lansing, MI 48824
www.michiganffa.org
association@michiganffa.org
Phone: (517) 353 - 9221
Fax: (517) 432 - 5632

Managing Editor:
Advising Editor:
Staff Editor:

Emmalee Blough
Michelle Sidel
Tyra Jonas

D Check this Out!

Listen to this member's account of her experience helping to fight world hunger.

F Say What

Members share their thoughts on organic farming methods.

H Learning to Do

Learn about an advisor who impacts students by teaching at two schools.

I Doing to Learn

Discover a variety of careers in the agricultural industry!

J Earning to Live

Hear a past FFA member share her involvement with Michigan Farm Bureau.

K Living to Serve

Catch up with our State Secretary as she shares highlights from her year.

N Student Spotlight

Hear about a member who uses her passion to educate others on agriculture.

O State Officer Stats

Check out what the 2015-2016 officers have in common with you.



Aim to be ONE OF A KIND.



One in 400 trillion - those are the odds that we became exactly who we are; that our parents would meet, and that we would have our hair, eyes, or height. Some may say that we look like a sibling or we remind them of a celebrity, but our differences outweigh any similarities. We all have a unique set of talents, experiences, and passions. But how can we harness our individual powers?

In school we do all that we can to avoid sticking out. We search for a group to hang out with in order to model their styles and the activities they like to do. It is far easier to follow the path of others than to tread a new one. In class we are afraid to ask questions for fear of others thinking we are dumb for not knowing the answer. Or perhaps we are afraid to join an after school group because of the stigmas associated with them. Only nerds join robotics or chess club, only geeks are in band and orchestra, and only jocks play sports. This fear of not conforming also affects our relationships with others. What would other people think if I go talk

to that new kid who is sitting all alone?

Throughout our travels this year as state officers, we have met members who are breaking these bonds of conformity. We met a student who wants to make reborn dolls and another member who disregarded what others would think when she wore an Elsa costume to school to celebrate homecoming week. There are students all across the state who are unabashed to live an authentic life.

Each one of us is a miracle. We need to follow our arrows in whichever direction we choose, to live a life that brings us the most joy. Being one of a kind requires nothing extraordinary--we don't need to become a world renowned recording artist or work to save the wildlife in Africa—all we have to do is chase after our dreams regardless of the opinions of others. In being one of a kind and doing what we love, we can make the world a better place. Michigan FFA, aim to be one of a kind.

-2015-2016 Michigan FFA State Officer Team

DID YOU KNOW

Michigan produces over 300 different commodities.



In 2015, Michigan produced 5.1 million turkeys.



Michigan organic sales totaled \$71.1 million in 2015



Check This Out!

A Trip to World Food Prize: One Student's Role in Fighting Food Insecurity

By: Autumn Zwiernik
Laingsburg FFA

It was an email marked "From: Mrs. Egg" that began my most interesting experience yet. Mrs. Eggleston, my FFA advisor, had sent me a flyer for the World Food Prize experience at Michigan State University. She informed me that if I won at the state level I would have the opportunity to travel to the esteemed World Food Prize conference as a youth delegate for Michigan. Over the summer, while my little sister ran through the grass under my not-so-watchful eye, I sat with a computer on my lap learning about and contemplating

major issues in the world that were impacting food security. After much consideration, I wrote a paper detailing the impacts of and solutions to climate volatility in the Bahamas. To give a brief summary of my paper, I concluded that food security in the Bahamas could be improved with increased home gardening and harvesting of invasive fish as a food supply. In addition, the contribution the Bahamas makes to climate change could be reduced by increased use of solar energy.

Once I was done with my paper I traveled to the Bahamas for a nine day Earthwatch research project studying the habitat of green sea turtles to determine what types of resources are most used by them. During my trip I was also able to tour the island of Eleuthera. I saw

firsthand the lives of the locals and refined the ideas for my paper. Many of the locals hunted queen conch, which is endangered, and as a result the quickly shrinking population is at risk. As an alternative, locals could hunt lionfish, an invasive species that is populating the fragile reefs of the Bahamas.

Once I got to Michigan State University, paper in hand, I was ready to share my ideas. The youth and faculty experts gathered in a lecture room for a light breakfast. This was a valuable time because we were able to network with experts from my local community and who work on diverse topics in food sustainability. Soon we split off into groups to tour sites of interest on campus. I went to a bean genetics lab. It was not a big space or even very organized but highly valuable work was being done there. Later I presented my paper to the group of youth and experts. Everyone had a chance to ask questions and discuss the issues we each brought forward.

I was on a bus in Milwaukee with my grandfather and sister when I got the news that I had been selected as a Michigan youth delegate to the World Food Prize conference. At the sight of the email I shrieked with excitement, hugged my grandfather and sister and explained to them that I had been selected to go to the World Food Prize. I was invited to take one mentor with me and since





Mrs. Egg was unable to attend, my mom was able to go with me. The World Food Prize would pay for most of my trip and the FFA generously

covered the remaining cost.

Months later I stepped into the Lansing airport, with suitcase and excitement overflowing. I met with the other young ladies who I would share the experience with. I couldn't imagine being more excited, until another delegate informed me that we were receiving gifts for our work. She smiled wide, held up a brand new Kindle Fire, and informed me that I would be getting one as well. This way we could document our experiences while they were occurring. Soon we were flying in the metal bird, looking down at the beautiful lights of Des Moines at night. We saw the elegant Hall of Laureates and the gold-topped capitol of Iowa.

The next morning when we all met in the lobby I was presented with some materials for my conference including a bracelet and motivational cards from Revolution Hunger to give to my friends. The conference hall was stunning. More than a hundred flags hung down from the wrap-around second story balcony. An elegant fountain stood in the lobby and giant murals of India hung down from the ceiling. After heading upstairs with the other Michigan delegates and our advisors, we all picked up our coffee and settled into the lecture hall, being careful not to walk in front of any of the cameras that were filming for TV.

There were multiple sessions of short talks and discussion panels on topics ranging from wheat genetics to water conservation. There were also sessions from aquaculture in small villages that provided protein for nursing mothers and improved infant survival, to micro-loan financing in remote locations that helped people purchase farm land. For me, the highlight of the conference was when all of the delegates had the privilege of hearing a speech from her Excellency Joyce Banda. She was the second female president in Africa, and she brought the crowd to tears as she spoke of her past as a young woman living in Malawi where the challenges she faced included limited opportunities for girls to attend school and later an abusive husband. She succeeded the former president after he died, as the constitution said she should, although people tried to prevent her from doing it and even attempted to assassinate her.

On the last day of the conference, all of the delegates

from around the world gathered at DuPont headquarters for breakfast and to split off into groups of ten to discuss their papers and present them to experts. This time there were experts from around the world - global thinkers and former World Food Prize laureates - who had spent a lifetime of effort raising millions of people from food insecurity and starvation. I have never been in a space with so many dedicated, inspiring, and generous people. I will never forget that feeling. ‡



Say What?

By: Tyra Jonas
State Reporter



John Williams
Region I
Olivet

"I do think that having organic crops is important because it is a large industry and is still in high demand. However, organic crops alone could not keep up with the current demand. I believe it's necessary to have alternatives such as GMOs and pesticides to increase yields to keep increasing the crop industry."

"I like organic farming because it works with nature instead of against it. It helps make soils better and it shows that agriculture is diverse. I think people struggle to see the positives in organic farming, but I can see why this is. Organic farming won't feed the world with the growing population, but it will help show the diversity within agriculture."

Carl Tighe
Region II
Saline



Andrew Davis
Region III
Laker

"Organic farming methods are less efficient than that of farming conventionally. The crops grown by organic processes are more prone to pests and diseases than genetically modified crops. Although there has been some controversy over the labeling of products with GMOs in them, these products have not caused major food safety incidents."

The question: What do you think about organic farming?

"While the organic label is heavily regulated and hard to obtain, organic farming has allowed consumers to find food that they feel better about eating. Organic foods are non-GMO and hormone free in animal products which some consumers want. But organic farming will not provide enough food to feed a growing population."

Eric Moser
Region IV
Dansville



Drake Roseler
Region V
Montague

"Organic farming is on the rise. It contains significantly lower levels of pesticide residues compared to conventional produce. The main strategy for organic farmers in controlling pests and diseases is with good plant nutrition and management. I believe that organic farming is good with the continued spread of practices and knowledge."

"I think that organic agriculture is a good thing as long as it's used correctly. I've noticed within my region that a lot of people do not understand what it is. It is great that we are keeping agriculture so diverse, but using just organic farming will not help feed the world. Organic farming has a role in the fight to help though."

Makayla Shaw
Region VI
Standish-Sterling



12 years ago, FFA members answered this exact question with these responses:

Braidie Butters

Homer

“Organic farming is a natural, environmental friendly way to produce food. Yet, with today’s increasing population, it will not meet the worldwide food requirements and is not a practice many farmers can implement.”

Dawn Fellows

Waldron

“Organic farming will become more popular in the future because it is healthier. Most people are willing to buy organic products even if it costs more, to ensure that their food does not contain any pesticides or herbicides.”

Kaela Thom

Breckenridge

“Organic farming is a good option for farmers to earn more by selling organic crops and for consumers who want to buy natural foods. However, there are a few drawbacks, in that crops grown without the use of chemicals may be more susceptible to weeds and lower yields.”

Jack Renwick

Traverse Bay Area Tech Center

“I live next to an organic farm and support organic farming because it is cheaper to produce, safer to consume, and is better for the environment.”

Our Motto

Learning to Do

By: Tyra Jonas
State Reporter

Meet the winning Teacher Tuesday – Mr. Tom Stahl. He teaches at the Milan FFA Chapter and the Dundee FFA Chapter, but his journey did not begin there. Thirty-seven years ago, he started teaching at Reading High School in the fall of 1979. Before teaching, he went to Britton High School and Sand Creek High School



playing many sports. In high school, he never pictured his life to involve agriculture and never saw a need for it. However, when he went to Michigan State University he changed his major to Agricultural Education and began his journey as an advocate for agriculture.

As a teacher, he says one of his greatest accomplishments is starting and reopening FFA chapters. “Reading HS had been closed for two years when I went there to start teaching. I opened and started the South and West Washtenaw Consortium Ag program for Washtenaw county school and took over as Milan HS teacher and FFA advisor.” He also assisted in many openings of FFA chapters throughout the state of Michigan!

At Dundee and Milan, Mr. Stahl hosts many unique activities. Dundee’s activities include an



annual antique tractor raffle, a mechanical applications class, and weekly challenges between ag classes for ice cream sandwich prizes.

Milan hosts very similar activities that include a pre-football game hog roast tailgate, the Milan FFA coat drive for a local support group, and an ‘Invasive Species Watch’ at a large pondscape system in front of the school.

Mr. Stahl enjoys watching his students grow and become confident, strong leaders in their classwork, FFA, and life. As a teacher, he encourages his students to grow, achieve, and to do their very best. He says one of the best feelings is watching a student when they reach their goal. He is a strong believer in hard work, determination, planning to be a success, and doing everything to your best ability the first time. One of his favorite phrases is, “The easiest thing to do is nothing, but what can you get that is worthwhile with nothing?”



His advice to students is to have confidence that they can do things and do them well. Anyone can achieve great success. Mr. Stahl believes no other organization offers more activities, contests, awards, travel, assistance, and people who care about students’ success. ‡

In Motion

Doing to Learn

By: Emmalee Blough
Past State Officer

Pursuing agriculture no longer limits an individual to 'just farming.' Today, agriculturalists engage in all facets of science, technology, business, communication, and promotion adapting to the growing and changing face of the industry. There are many opportunities for FFA members, regardless of our background, within the agricultural industry to pursue our individual passions and interests.

Botanist:

Botany is the scientific study of plants which includes algae, fungi, lichens, mosses, ferns, conifers, and flowering



plants. Just as the variety of plants is diverse, so is the field of Botany as individuals can work with a large number of plants. The minimum education required is a bachelors, but some positions require a Master's or a Ph.D.

Food Chemist:

Food chemistry is the study of chemical qualities of food primarily to ensure the safety of consumers and to produce enough nutritious food to support the growing population. Individuals in this field study and evaluate properties of food during storage, preparation, and production based on legal regulations. At least a Bachelor's in chemistry or a related subject like food science is required. In most advanced positions a graduate degree is necessary.

Animal Geneticist:

Animal Geneticists apply scientific principles

to improving the health of wild species and to enhance production and quality of the livestock industry. They



study gene function and how these functions affect growth, reproduction, disease resistance, behavior, and other characteristics in wild and production animals. To become an animal geneticist a Master's or Ph.D. is required after receiving a Bachelor's studying animal science or other related subjects.

Agronomist:

Agronomy is the study of soil productivity and seed and crop quality. Individuals who study agronomy test soil and run statistical analysis on crops to understand and improve soil management and field crop production. They deal with the health of crops in terms of disease, weed control, and insect control to recommend solutions to farmers. Most jobs only require a Bachelor's in agronomy or a related degree, but a Master's is necessary for most research positions.



Agriculture is extremely diverse and offers careers for almost every passion. These are just a few of the opportunities students can find within the agricultural industry. There are many more options to explore when pursuing a career in agriculture, food, and natural resources! ‡

Earning to Live

By: Alexandria Schnabelrauch
Michigan Farm Bureau

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I'm Alex Schnabelrauch, and I'm blessed to work with some of the state's most passionate, talented agriculturalists as Michigan Farm Bureau's Young Farmer manager. My childhood was spent walking and fitting lambs for the best week of the year – county fair week – and tagging along with my ag teacher dad to Parliamentary Procedure practices. My FFA career included service as a state and national officer and facilitation for the National FFA Washington Leadership Conference, Blast Off, National Leadership Conference for State Officers, and 212 Conference. A proud Spartan, I graduated in 2012 from Michigan State University with a degree in agriculture and natural resources communications.

Tell us about what you do every day.

I know I'm biased, but I have one of the coolest jobs on the face of the planet. I get to work with 18-35 year-old agricultural leaders to develop programs, contests and opportunities to promote leadership, personal growth and business success. We try to help these young agriculturalists learn more about the industry, meet other industry leaders and help serve their local communities. With so much overlap with FFA, it's a great organization to transition to after hanging up your blue corduroy jacket.

What is the best part of your new job?

Growth. From helping members of the State Young Farmer Committee gain the confidence to speak in front of a large group to watching county programs flourish under passionate leadership, the best part of my job is being part of something that's constantly growing and improving. I love being able to see the hard work of farmers pay off at the local, district and state level. I'm lucky to be part of an organization that puts farmers' interests first and gives back to local communities.

Who do you look to as a mentor?

I've had some amazing mentors along the way: Don Wheeler, Dave Wyrick, Dale Beaty, Beth



Stuever, Renee Durham, Laura Moser, Sheila Burkhardt and the list goes on. They've served as advisors, confidants, coaches, and cheerleaders, and they constantly

look out for my best interest and long-term success and growth. They're the people I call when I'm weighing decisions, and the leaders I trust to help me see sides or options I never would have previously considered. If you don't have a mentor, get one! It's easy.

Step 1: Pick someone with the qualities I mentioned above

Step 2: Develop a list of three to five goals so they can hold you accountable

Step 3: Ask them (in person is best)

Step 4: Set up a regular time to meet with them face-to-face to catch up and gauge progress

Do you have any advice for high school students preparing for their future in college and the workforce?

1. Job Shadow – Don't know what you want to do after high school? You don't have to! Take the opportunity to check out a variety of options, not just on Google, but by riding along with professionals in your community. Don't know who to ask? Reach out to your ag teacher, alumni and sponsors!

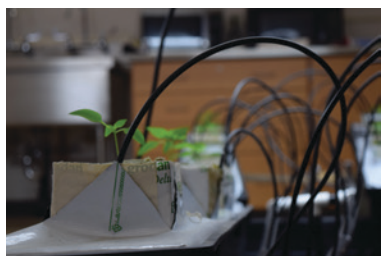
2. Try Everything – You might not know what the FFA Discussion Meet is or realize there's a Risk Management Essay Contest, but try them anyway! Some of my favorite high school experiences came from trying something new or volunteering for something I didn't totally understand. And take charge of finding these opportunities yourself! Future employers love initiative.

3. Build Your Rep – From thinking twice before posting something on Instagram to networking with local business people, it's never too early to start building a great reputation. Introduce yourself. Write thank you notes. Volunteer your time. The more people you meet now, the better off you'll be in college and your future career. ‡

Living to Serve

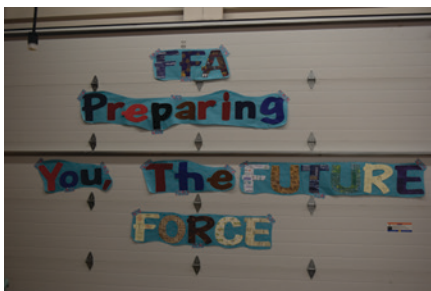
By: Andrea Williams
State Secretary

Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, and Living to Serve. This statement is one that inspires 629,367 blue corduroy wearing members from across the United States. The National FFA Organization is one that takes pride in orienting itself around the



purpose of serving others. There are so many individuals I have encountered within my year of service who are the true definition of servant leaders.

According to Illinois FFA State President, Kade Hill, his definition of living to serve “is all about making an effort on a daily basis to serve”. He does little things every day that add up to make a big impact. Sheridan Pawlowski from the North Huron FFA Chapter defines living to serve as helping with a variety of different community projects, setting goals for herself, and truly challenging herself to get out of her comfort zone. Sheridan helps her chapter by promoting a n d inspiring younger members. She loves being able to help m e n t o r



underclassmen with different events and awards. Her favorite part of her chapter is her advisor, Mr. Joe Ankley. Sheridan explained she wouldn't be as successful if it weren't for the kindness of her advisor. He challenges her to go above and beyond every day helping her to grow. Thank you Sheridan

and Mr. Ankley for your outstanding amount of service and love for this organization.

Being elected as the State Secretary has opened my eyes to the diversity of agriculture within FFA and the state of Michigan.

Hailing from the Ogemaw Heights FFA, I am filled with passion and love for my home chapter. Traveling to seventeen different chapters all over Michigan this year has been the best experience of my life. I have not only been able to see everyone else's dedication and love for their chapters, but also their excitement for agriculture. I have witnessed

every chapter living to serve their communities. I see advisors living to serve for the better of their students. I see FFA members from across the state living to serve for agriculture. We serve this great organization to learn and grow. We learn the true testaments of life; we learn how to be good winners and losers; we learn how the FFA can benefit our futures.

But most importantly we grow as individuals who live to serve our families, communities, and our chapters. Through my travels, I have experienced the one thing that all FFA members have in common - living to serve for the FFA! ‡



JOIN MICHIGAN FFA ALUMNI

IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE
STATE, **FFA ALUMNI** MEMBERS
ARE COACHING, MENTORING,
FUNDRAISING & PREPARING THE
NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS.

JOIN THEM. NO JACKET REQUIRED.



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT MICHIGANFFA.COM/ALUMNI



WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?

Fill
dinner plates
by buying
license plates.

Help empower tomorrow's farmers, scientists, communicators and food processors. Purchase a redesigned, Pure Michigan Agricultural Heritage license plate! You are making an investment in our future – Michigan's youth. For just \$35, you can help prepare the next generation of agriculture leaders by supporting FFA and K-12 agricultural education programs.

Get your plate today. Visit your local Secretary of State Office or go to www.michigan.gov/SOS and click on the "Owning a Vehicle" link for order forms. Questions? Call 517-432-2482.



www.michiganffa.org

Student Spotlight

By: Tyra Jonas
State Reporter

Jenna DuBois

Fremont FFA



Jenna is currently a senior at Fremont High School where she has decided her current career path will be in the medical field. Right now her goal is to attend

Lake Superior State University because aside from the FFA, healthcare is one of her passions. She enjoys making positive changes in people's lives and believes through this career path she will be able to make an impact. Jenna serves as her chapter's Historian and has participated in many activities in her FFA career. On the local level, she has participated in her school's annual Drive Your Tractor to School Day, Homecoming Hog Roast, several river clean ups, and assisted with numerous fundraisers in her chapter. Outside the local level, she has attended the Washington Leadership Conference, Region V Camp, the State Leadership Conference for Chapter Officers, and three State Conventions.



Recently, Jenna has created an SAE through the Washington Leadership Conference. She created a "Living to Serve" plan to take back to her community that would satisfy a need. Jenna saw that in her community there was a lack of knowledge on agriculture. With her urban background, she also saw her own need to gain more knowledge on agriculture. After doing massive amounts of research and designing a six-week curriculum for younger students, she went to Fremont Elementary School. Now she educates these younger students every Friday during her sixth hour. She covers

topics including nutrition and food safety. Later in the year, she will make lessons on preservation, the history of agriculture, distribution, and trade and marketing. Jenna says the biggest challenge she faced was working with teacher's schedules and her own schedule for these lessons.



Outside of FFA, Jenna interns at the Gerber Memorial Hospital's medical lab. This allows her to see how various tests are run. She enjoys being able to see the individuals who are doing the behind the scenes work. Interning here taught her how to appreciate everyone within the healthcare field and showed her that everyone is able to make a difference in the lives of others. Jenna remains in the FFA and continues to stay actively involved because she discovered a deep passion for the organization's values and beliefs. Looking back to her first FFA meeting, she remembers her first thought about FFA was that it's just farmers. However as she became more involved, she noticed it wasn't just farming. It was about developing agriculturists, building future leaders, and growing students who want to make a difference in the world. Jenna encourages students thinking about joining the organization to attend their chapter meetings. "FFA is for anybody and everybody; there is absolutely something amazing in this organization."



State Officer Stats



Lucas Wielfaert
State Sentinel

Favorites

Chapter: Lenawee Tech Center

Sport: Bull Riding

College: Michigan State University

Movie: *We Were Soldiers*

SAE: Vegetable Production

T.V. Show: *American Pickers*

Theme Song: "Voices"

Candy: Zero bars



Taylor Williams
Region I State Vice President

Favorites

Chapter: Centreville

Sport: Golf

SAE: Diversified Livestock

Movie: *How to Train Your Dragon*

Hobby: Hunting

Musician: Jason Aldean

Theme Song: "Let it Go"

Food: Venison Stew



Holly Tait
Region III State Vice President

Favorites

Chapter: Laker

Sport: Track and Field

College: Michigan State University

Hobby: Exploring

SAE: Diversified Livestock

Book: *The Giving Tree*

Theme Song: "Uncharted"

Musician: Taylor Swift



HANDS ON PROGRAMS

The Institute of Agricultural Technology

delivers innovative, educational programs that develop career-ready graduates through intensive, practical learning and skill enhancement in animal sciences, plant sciences and electrical technologies.

All programs can be completed in two years, including a required professional internship experience. Programs are offered on MSU's East Lansing campus and in partnership with several Michigan community colleges across the state.

Learn more about the Institute of Agricultural Technology by visiting **www.iat.msu.edu** or call 517-355-0190.



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

College of Agriculture
and Natural Resources

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer.

Certificate Programs in East Lansing

Agricultural Industries
Livestock Industries
Dairy Management
Landscape and Nursery Management
Horse Management
Electrical Technology
Fruit, Vegetable and Organic Horticulture Management
Turfgrass Management (Golf emphasis)
Sports and Commercial Turf Management

Off Campus Certificate Programs

Glen Oaks Community College
Centerville, Michigan
Agricultural Operations

Southwestern Michigan College
Dowagiac, Michigan
Agricultural Operations
Applied Horse Science
Landscape Management
Fruit and Vegetable Crop Management
Viticulture

Grand Rapids, Michigan
Landscape and Lawn Management

Montcalm Community College
Sidney and Greenville, Michigan
Agricultural Operations
Applied Horse Science
Landscape Management
Fruit and Vegetable Crop Management

Northwestern Michigan College
Traverse City, Michigan
Agricultural Operations
Landscape Management
Fruit and Vegetable Crop Management
Viticulture

Delta College
University Center, Michigan
Agricultural Operations
Fruit and Vegetable Crop Management



MISSOURI FFA TODAY

SPRING 2016

Influence Tomorrow

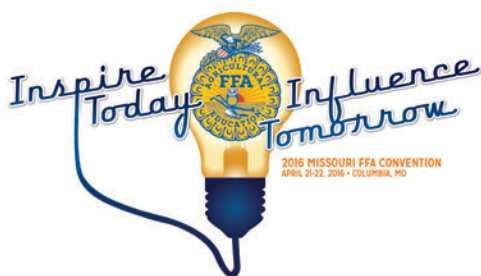
State convention set for April 21-22

FIND INSPIRATION TODAY

BY JOANN PIPKIN

Great people do great things. That's the message author, motivational speaker and award-winning journalist Dr. Rick Rigsby hopes to leave Missouri FFA members as he headlines this year's state FFA Convention, April 21-22 in Columbia.

Rigsby devotes his full attention to empowering people worldwide — from presenting leadership principles in Nigeria to speaking to Fortune 500 companies in the Americas, Europe and Canada. He offers common-sense wisdom to those desiring to rise to greater levels of excellence. In addition to speaking, he's the author of *Lessons from a Third Grade Dropout*, the story of timeless common-sense wisdom learned from his father.



Missouri FFA members will gather in Columbia April 21-22 for their annual state convention. Highlights of the event include recognizing the state's winners in proficiency award areas and career development events.

A college professor for two decades, Rigsby spent most of those years at Texas A&M University where he also served as character coach and chaplain for the Aggies football team.

CONTINUED ON PAGE D

Table of Contents

PAGE B

The President's Post

PAGE C

Meet Miss Missouri

PAGE F

In Their Words

PAGE G

State Officer Q&A

PAGE H

Making the Most of an SAE

PAGE J

The Start of Something New

PAGE L

Preparing for Real Life

PAGE N

Calendar of Events

THE PRESIDENT'S POST

Today's determination leads to tomorrow's success

2015-16 State FFA Officers

Area	Officer
1	Maggie Voisard Mid-Buchanan
2	Adam Kirby-President Trenton
3	Hadley Williams Green City
4	Alex Stichnote - Secretary Ashland
5	Brandelyn Martin-1st V.P. Silex
6	Austin Boland Sweet Springs
7	Rylee Streit Holden
8	Jacob Hoellering California
9	Ty Whittaker Miller
10	Tanner Koenig Wheatland
11	Maura Butler Seneca
12	Clay Smith Mansfield
13	Hunter Corman Willow Springs
14	Braxton Hoemann Union
15	Alexa Nordwald East Prairie
16	Morgan Taylor Doniphan
	Cole Edwards - Past Pres. Salisbury

Department of Elem. & Sec. Education
P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone: (573) 751-3544.

District Supervisors: Leon Busdieker,
Marie Davis, Keith Dietzschold, Lisa Evans,
David Higgins & Steven Rogers

Missouri FFA Today • Joann Pipkin, Editor
3674 S. State Hwy N • Republic, MO 65738
Email: info@missouriffa.org
Phone: (417) 732-8552

BY ADAM KIRBY STATE FFA PRESIDENT

I have always found spring to be one of the most amazing seasons in our wonderful state of Missouri. It seems as though everywhere we turn we can discover something unique and colorful if we simply look for it. If we look around us we can see some amazing things — the slow, beautiful budding of the dogwood trees; bees humming from petal to petal; fresh blades of grass popping up in our yards; and the newfound robins returning home chirping in the trees. These are the reasons I love spring so much, the sights that are hidden right in front of our eyes. These amazing sights lie directly in front of us, but we have to open our eyes and look in order to find them.

FFA is much like the spring season in a way. FFA provides thousands of opportunities and chances for its members; all we have to do is open our eyes. Just like the amazing sights of spring, these opportunities and goals are in front of us, waiting for us to seize them. If we don't look, though, they can quickly be gone. Still, the amazing thing is these opportunities are constantly being replaced by new ones.



It's important to remember this as we soon travel to Columbia for our annual Missouri State FFA Convention. If you have the opportunity to attend, remember to keep an eye out for new opportunities as they can take many forms. Be willing to get out there and try new things, and meet new people because it's amazing what you can find! Be the person to take an opportunity and discover something fantastic, something life changing, or something awe-inspiring. Whether it's finishing this year at school, attending State Convention, or any other FFA event, remember to push yourself to find those opportunities. If not you, then who? If not here, then where? If not now, then when?

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to Department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Office of the General Counsel, Coordinator - Civil Rights Compliance (Title VI/Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act), 6th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; fax number 573-522-4883; email civilrights@dese.mo.gov.

MEET MISS MISSOURI

Former FFA member wears prestigious crown

FFA SUCCESS STORY

BY JOANN PIPKIN

Believe in the beauty of your dreams. Miss Missouri 2015 McKensie Garber hopes to instill that message in the hearts and minds of the state's FFA members as a speaker at this year's State FFA Convention, April 21-22 in Columbia.

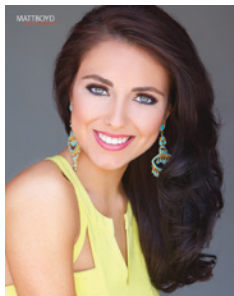
A former FFA member from Hale, Missouri, Garber grew up on a farm but her agriculture classes in high school helped teach her the greater facts about the industry. Her Supervised Agriculture Experience project focused on raising rabbits, and Garber said that taught her responsibility and the business side of agriculture.

On a broader scale, Garber said FFA helped further develop her public speaking skills, which she uses every day in her role as Miss Missouri.

"One of my favorite lines from the FFA creed is, 'Without labor neither knowledge nor wisdom can accomplish much,'" she said. "That has always stuck with me. What really separates the cream from the crop is the people that are willing to work really hard."

While advocating for agriculture is part of her job as Miss Missouri, Garber's personal platform focuses on character education through CharacterPlus. In addition, she is also helping raise funds for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, the national platform for Miss America.

"I come from a town of only 419 people," she said. "That was really pivotal in shaping me into the person I am today. That's the perfect opportunity to talk about Missouri agriculture."



Miss Missouri 2015
McKensie Garber

A graduate of Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma, with a degree in convergence journalism, Garber served as Miss Missouri's Outstanding Teen in 2011 and is the first woman to win the teen and miss title in Missouri.

COME VISIT

at the **CAFNR Career Connection Days**

Visit MU on:

February 22, 2016
March 14, 2016
April 25, 2016

Find Your Connection

Register at cafnr.missouri.edu/prospective/

 College of Agriculture,
Food & Natural Resources
University of Missouri

Influence Tomorrow

Continued from Page A

Rigsby is a native of San Francisco and is a two-time recipient of the prestigious Outstanding Teaching Award by Texas A&M University's College of Liberal Arts.

Themed, "Inspire Today, Influence Tomorrow," this year's state convention also features awards presentations, career development events, workshops and the ever-popular FFA Career Show.

Missouri also welcomes National FFA Western Region Vice President Sarah Draper of Corinne, Utah, to the convention. The simple words, "I believe" started Draper on her unique path within the National FFA Organization.

"I did not come from a farming background or have siblings that bled blue and gold; there were no traditions to uphold," Draper said. "However, I decided to take a chance on this creed — never

imagining it would one day become what my heart was made of."

After surviving the growing pains of being nudged and then tossed from her comfort zone when competing in CDEs and finding a job at a local dairy, Draper soon realized the opportunities available to her through agricultural education and FFA.

"I discovered what it meant to lead through observing others' examples and experiencing it for myself serving as an officer at the chapter and state level," Draper said. "I found my purpose in this



Dr. Rick Rigsby will headline the Missouri FFA Convention April 21-22 in Columbia. Through his motivational speaking, Rigsby empowers audiences to become great people who do great things.

irreplaceable and vital industry when my career and passion came together beautifully in my major of agricultural education at Utah State University."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



The state's top teams in career development events will be honored at the state FFA convention during the Friday evening closing session.

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE



Sarah Draper, National FFA's Western Region Vice President, is among the speakers and workshop presenters at this year's state FFA Conven-

Upon graduation from college, Draper hopes to become an agriculture educator and work in the State Office of Education advocating for better career and technical education in Utah.

"I want to be a role model and example of the positive impact involvement in this organization can have on one's future career goals and life to all students and parents, members and non-members alike, sponsors, school administrators and legislators."

Former Hale FFA member and Miss Missouri 2015 McKensie Garber will also address FFA members (see related article on page C) at the convention.

In addition to these guest speakers, the 88th Annual Missouri FFA Convention will feature lead-

ership workshops for members. The FFA Career Show also gives students and guests the opportunity to learn about agricultural businesses, organizations, colleges and universities and more. Star State Farmer, State Star in Agribusiness and State Star in Placement awards will be present-

ed and more than 750 State FFA Degree recipients will be recognized during the event. More than 8,000 people are expected to be in Columbia at the University of Missouri Hearnes Center for the state's largest FFA event.



As an FFA member, the skills you learn today will help you become a successful leader tomorrow. And we look forward to a future with you as an electric cooperative **member**.



Missouri's
Electric Cooperatives



In Their Words

Up close with your Missouri State FFA Officers

HUNTER CORMAN

The 1947 National FFA Convention was one unlike any other that came before it, but what many do not know is that in 1947 a new and unique opportunity would become available for the members of the FFA. The National FFA Band gave students of diverse backgrounds from all over the United States an opportunity to play great music and become more involved in the blue jacket.

Those students were probably similar to the ones I met when I decided to try out for the percussion section of the National FFA Band in 2014. The fellow members that I met left a lasting impression on me.



HUNTER CORMAN
State V.P., Area 13

These students were well-rounded FFA members that attained supreme leadership abilities. Some of these individuals also became state officers, including the treasurer and president of the Nebraska and Tennessee FFA associations. The

people I met were from all walks of life, and within my percussion section I met an FFA member who was from a big city in Illinois. He told me that he believed his freshman year he could not make a difference in agriculture. However, he began to think of many ways that would impact his large community.

One idea the Illinois FFA member shared was how he grew strawberries on his back porch and made jams and jellies that he could later sell to his neighbors. His choices with his SAE led him to apply for the National FFA Band. This story motivated me to try out for a speaking part so I could introduce the band on stage during convention. I was nervous to say the least, but by pushing myself to Go All Out, I found myself speaking on the stage at National FFA Convention.

Meeting these people definitely left a lasting impact. I stretched myself to get out of my comfort zone, trust others and work as a team to make the best sound for the National FFA Organization at convention. I actually found myself continuing to Go All Out each day after convention was over. One simple choice led me to not only create great memories, but also learn great lessons through the National FFA Band.

My hope is that Missouri FFA members will be inspired to "Go All Out as you live your lives. Motivate yourselves and put everything you have into everything you do. Be determined. Know no bounds. Take action."

A photograph showing three students, two girls and one boy, working with a brown and white cow in a green metal frame, likely a lab or internship setting. The cow has a yellow tag with the number "5" on its ear. The students are wearing dark jackets and are focused on their work.

NCMC's Agriculture & Natural Resources program can help you obtain a career or prepare for transfer to a university in two years or less.

Barton Farm Campus

NCMC's Barton Farm Campus features the latest technology in its labs along with outdoor, hands-on learning & internships.

NCMC's Agriculture & Natural Resources department has been home to six national PAS officers.

NorthCentral
MISSOURI COLLEGE
www.ncmissouri.edu

Trenton, MO 660-359-3948

State Officer Q&A

Who's that underneath the blue corduroy?

TY WHITTAKER

Hometown/FFA Chapter: Miller

College/Major (if applicable):
Senior at Miller High School. Plan to study animal science in college.

SAE: Rodeo announcer, auctioneer and Angus cattle.

What motivated you to want to become a Missouri FFA Officer?

I love to get to know people and motivate them to be the best they can be! Missouri FFA is the perfect avenue to help me accomplish that.

Who is your hero and why?

Justin McKee, former voice of the PBR and a cowboy church pastor, is my hero. Justin has become successful doing the same things I love to do. Most importantly, he has done it all while serving God.

What are your future plans?

I want to attend College of the Ozarks and get a degree in animal science. Then, I would like to pursue a master's degree in equine embryology from Colorado State University.

What is something unique or interesting that few people know about you?

I love to go to the coffee shop in the morning before school and visit with the local farmers.

Advice for FFA Members:

Don't be afraid to try. Of course, the first time you do something



you will be nervous. Still, do not let that stop you from trying. The only people who truly fail are those who never try!

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

LEAD CONFERENCE

June 1-3
Registration due May 13

STATE FFA CAMP

June 6-July 19
See FFA advisor for registration

PUBLIC SPEAKING ACADEMY

June 7-9
Registration due May 13

THE LEADERSHIP ADVENTURE

August 4-5
Registration due July 25

An advertisement for a John Deere Turf Open House. The top half features a yellow and green John Deere Z245 riding lawn mower on a green lawn. The text "Your CHANCE TO RIDE, DRIVE AND SAVE." is overlaid on the image. To the right, on a yellow background, it says "TURF OPEN HOUSE" and "SATURDAY APRIL 2ND 9:00 A.M. - 3 P.M.". The bottom half of the ad is white and contains the text "Test drive John Deere equipment and get exclusive discounts!", "Your Partner in Growing a Better Tomorrow", "Visit us at www.sydenstrickers.com", and "10 Missouri Locations". Logos for STIHL, HONDA, JOHN DEERE, and SYDENSTRICKER are shown at the bottom, along with a Facebook icon.

Making the Most of an SAE

Rylee Streit: behind the scenes of Chiefs football

CONNECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

BY ALISON BOS

FFA members have many opportunities when it comes to their supervised agricultural experience (SAE). For Rylee Streit, the opportunity arose to work with the Kansas City Chiefs, and she is making the most of it.

Streit, a current state officer from the Holden FFA Chapter, has an SAE that comprises Equine Placement, Equine Entrepreneurship and Sheep Production. Serving as the Warpaint assistant for the Kansas City Chiefs professional football team is included in the equine placement segment of her SAE.

According to the Kansas City Chiefs' website, Warpaint is a 17-year-old American Paint Horse mare that is a mascot for

Kansas City Chiefs' home games and is ridden by Susie, one of the Chiefs' cheerleaders. She is featured at every home game held at Arrowhead Stadium. Two hours before kickoff, Susie and Warpaint meet with fans at the Ford Fan Experience. They then take part in pregame activities. During the game, the duo makes a victory lap every time the Chiefs score a point. Warpaint has her own stall in the tunnel, and when the Chiefs get close to scoring, she must be brought to the field to prepare for her lap in front of a stadium full of screaming fans.

"I became involved with Warpaint three years ago when my horse trainer – also Warpaint's trainer – asked me if I wanted to tag along and help out at a game," Streit said. "I have only missed one home game since then."

Streit's responsibilities include preparing Warpaint for game days. She is responsible for washing and clipping her the day before a game, as well as conducting touch up washes on the morning of a game. In addition, Streit is in charge of getting Warpaint saddled and warmed up at the stadium. She often has to warm her up in the parking lot after Susie takes her to field practice.

Streit also stays with Susie and Warpaint as they travel to various activities throughout the stadium. She helps with crowd control, takes pictures and answers any questions fans may have. During the game, she leads Warpaint back to the tunnel after every victory run.

"My top priority is fan safety and the security of Susie and Warpaint," Streit explained.

Through this SAE, Streit has learned the value of patience and the importance of connecting with people. She has learned how much she enjoys working with others and also how she can incorporate her passion for horses into her



Holden FFA member Rylee Streit's Supervised Agricultural Experience includes equine placement where she works behind-the-scenes with Warpaint, the mascot of the Kansas City Chiefs football team.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

work. Plus, this SAE has helped her develop the ability to think through difficult problems because working at home games is very stressful at times. According to Streit, there is always a likelihood of something going wrong. One slip up can cause major problems; therefore she must always be able to control her reactions and handle the situation in the safest way possible.

Streit emphasized how SAEs offer several opportunities for FFA members. She explained that lifelong skills are taught enabling members to advance into a desired

career path, as well as make connections that will be helpful in the future.

“You never know where your experience will take you, so take advantage of what is presented,” Streit said. “Also, make sure you keep your record books up to date as this is a very good habit for both proficiency award applications and tracking expenses/income in the future.”

In addition to the lifelong skills, Streit also explained how SAEs provide FFA members the opportunity to win awards on the area, state and national levels. She

went on to note SAEs are a way to explore different career fields, gain experience in a variety of jobs and make extra income along the way.

In addition to her Equine Placement SAE, Streit raises and shows Suffolk/Hampshire crossbred lambs. She also owns and trains show horses under the guidance of a pre-established trainer in her area. Streit is a senior at Holden High School and plans to attend Texas A&M University in College Station to major in agricultural business. She also intends to show on the horsemanship side of their nationally-recognized equestrian team.

DATA ON DEMAND

WITH THE NEW AGRONOMY GUIDE APP

Download it for iOS, Android or Kindle at www.mfa-inc.com/crops/agronomyguide.aspx

The Start of Something New

Inaugural year for Bevier, Sturgeon, Higbee FFA

WELCOME NEW CHAPTERS

BY ALISON BOS

Three newly instated chapters have joined the Missouri FFA family. The Bevier, Sturgeon and Higbee FFA Chapters are all thriving in their first year with goals of further growth and success.

Each of these chapters has developed objectives, while remaining active in their communities. Advisors and members are motivated to bring agriculture awareness to their school and communities, as well as provide more opportunities for students.

Katrina Stewart, Bevier FFA Chapter advisor, said this is the school's first year to offer agriculture classes, and there is a lot of student interest. Her largest agriculture class comprises 23 students, which is a large number for a school with 200 in its student

body. Currently, the school's agriculture program offers a variety of classes for high school and even an introductory course geared towards eighth grade students.

The Bevier community has also been supportive of the FFA program.

"We have an advisory board that helps keep community members involved," Stewart said. "They are eager to see the program grow."

Bevier FFA Chapter President Ryan Dawson said their ag ed program has brought students together and helped to fill leadership roles. In addition, he emphasized how FFA has helped students be active within the Bevier community and further develop knowledge of the agriculture

Higbee FFA's objectives are based in part on acknowledging the growing need of agriculture in today's world.



industry.

"The agriculture program not only allows us to participate in hands-on activities, but also expand our education of agricultural-related careers," he said.

The Higbee FFA Chapter has developed objectives and goals to take them through their first year and beyond. Kathryn Coon, Higbee FFA Chapter advisor, said objectives are based upon generating agricultural knowledge, incorporating an appreciation of the industry and indicating the growing need of agriculture in today's world.

In addition, Coon strives to support the development of individual students' talents and develop them as strong prospective employees in the agricultural industry. Plus, she hopes to provide hands-on and

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

practical applications of agricultural content while working with other subject areas to provide cross-curricular connections.

Higbee FFA hosted its charter ceremony in December to celebrate its first year as an official FFA chapter and educate the school and community about its program.

The Sturgeon FFA Chapter worked throughout the summer to prepare for its inaugural year. The chapter's founding officer team, which is made up of Ben Holland, president; Madeline Bright, vice president; Hunter Shilling, secretary; Jake

Vaughn, treasurer; Alana Bowne, reporter; and Daniel Ross, sentinel, attended a LEAD Conference and an officer retreat to plan their chapter's program of activities.

Currently, Sturgeon offers agricultural classes for high school and eighth grade students. The chapter plans to build a shop in the near future to accommodate more shop-based classes and hopes to build an animal science laboratory. Other goals include being recognized in the FFA award program, have 100 percent membership and be successful in career development events.

The Sturgeon community has also

been very supportive. The Friends of Sturgeon FFA was established as an active support group. They have already hosted a fried chicken dinner where over 400 people were served and \$5,000 was raised for the chapter. In October, the charter ceremony was held and many members of the community supported the chapter financially.

Daniel Buckman, Sturgeon FFA Chapter advisor, said he is honored to help develop the chapter.

"I have a great set of students who are doing great work to start some traditions for the Sturgeon FFA Chapter," he said. "I think we have a bright future."



MISSOURI
FARM BUREAU

800-778-6452 / www.mofb.org



Agriculture
stay involved!

**Join a Collegiate Farm Bureau Chapter
at the university of your choice!**

- University of Missouri - Columbia
- Missouri State University
- Southeast Missouri State University
- University of Central Missouri
- Truman State University
- Northwest Missouri State University
- College of the Ozarks

OZARKS TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE



start here go anywhere!

- *Agriculture*
- *Construction*
- *Drafting & Design*
- *Industrial Maintenance*
- *Machine Tool*
- *Turf & Landscape Management*
- *Welding*

Accelerated training programs are available and we accept A+ students!

www.otc.edu

Preparing for Real Life

Career Development Events open doors to the future

TEAMWORK TIME

BY ALISON BOS

It's no secret. Career Development Events (CDEs) cultivate abilities FFA members can develop and use in their futures. CDEs such as Job Interview, Agricultural Sales, Agricultural Issues and Parliamentary Procedure especially help members build life skills beneficial to their careers.

With state FFA convention right around the corner and contest season upon us, past CDE participants and advisors speak out about the learning opportunities these events provide and why more members should explore what these CDEs have to offer.

Parliamentary Procedure is a team-based contest that requires members to work together to conduct concise and orderly meetings. Mount Vernon FFA members Madeline Roberts, Samantha Schnake, McKenzie Loftis and Paige McFarlan all agree that participating on the Parliamentary Procedure team taught them communication, critical thinking and public speaking skills.

"These skills help me communicate with others using speeches, announcements and anything that involves speaking in front of a large group of people," McFarlan said. "It prepares me for any job out there that requires communication."

Rachel Thornton, advisor of the

Clopton FFA Chapter whose Parliamentary Procedure team won third at state last year, said the CDE instills teamwork, as well as effective and precise communication in its participants.

"Students learn how to think quickly on their feet," she explained. "They learn to give detailed answers and debates which will come in handy when interviewing for jobs."

The Job Interview CDE also teaches valuable skills that FFA members can utilize for the rest of their lives. Interviewing is a crucial aspect for obtaining a job; therefore skills learned in this CDE are extremely valuable.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



SUCCESS NEVER RESTS

ASGROW®

DEKALB
STRONG ROOTS.
STRONG YIELDS.®

Contact your local rep to **MAXIMIZE** yield in your field with our **ROCKSTAR** lineup of products.

Proud to support our local communities and Missouri FFA

www.asgrow.com | www.dekalb.com



STUDY AGRICULTURE
Northwest Missouri State University

Choose from **seven** comprehensive majors.

Gain hands-on experience at the **450-acre University Farm, Greenhouse Complex, Walk Center** and more.

Laptop computer and textbooks included in tuition

Bearcats Connect
nwmissouri.edu/ag
f /nwmsuAgDept

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

According to 2014 Job Interview state winner Ty Whittaker, “This CDE has taught me how to fill out a job application and how to interview. I think FFA members should participate because they will learn things that will be used each time they apply for a job.”

The Eldon FFA Chapter has been involved and successful in several CDEs including Agricultural Issues and Agricultural Sales. Agricultural Issues challenges members to defend both sides of a subject while also debating current issues. Holly Enowski, who placed fifth in the state Agricultural Issues competition and was a member of the National Top 20 Parliamentary Procedure Team, said the CDE helped her learn how to formulate her own opinion and be independent. Her teammates – Halle Herbert, Christian Potucek and Kayla Wallis – also agree that their experience while participating in this CDE has been nothing but valuable and is an excellent opportunity to be prepared for the real world.

“Agricultural Issues develops public speaking, critical thinking and the ability to create an intelligent defense of an idea, policy or action,” Potucek said.

The Agricultural Sales CDE enforces selling techniques as well as social, interpersonal and teamwork skills. Eldon FFA Advisor Tyler Schmidt said Agricultural Sales teaches students how to talk to people not only in a sales situation, but also

in day-to-day conversation such as when they meet another person for the first time.

Melinda Groves, a member of the Eldon Agricultural Sales team, explained that the CDE effectively prepares students to be able to “sell themselves” in the workplace, as well as learn to interact professionally with a customer. Claire Salmons, also a member of the Agricultural Sales team and a member of their national-winning Parliamentary Procedure team, emphasized how participation in Agricultural Sales and other CDEs can help build the future for FFA members.

“These CDEs teach students what they are good at and is a way to

discover passions, talents and interests,” Salmons said.

While statewide participation rates in these CDEs are often lower than other, more traditional contests, Parliamentary Procedure, Job Interview, Agricultural Issues and Agricultural Sales are all events that more FFA members should pursue and participate in.

“These leadership and career development events teach students how to communicate and work with one another,” Schmidt said. “It takes hard work and a lot of time to be successful at these events, which is something FFA members can take and apply in many different aspects of their lives.”



FFA Calendar

Missouri FFA is on the move

MARCH

1	HYMAX Academy Applications Due
2	Mizzou Ag Ed Society Invitational Leadership CDEs Columbia
4	MSU Horse Judging Clinic Springfield
5	Mo. Youth Livestock Grading & Judging UMC, Columbia
5	College of the Ozarks FFA Workshop Point Lookout
14	Crowder College LDEs Neosho
14	MU CAFNR College & Career Exploration Day Columbia
15	Lincoln University FFA Judging Day Jefferson City
17	NCMC Ag Club CDEs Trenton
21	Northeast District FFA LDEs/Ag Sales CDE Monroe City
22	Northwest District FFA LDEs Cameron
29	Central District Ag CDEs UCM
31	Central District FFA LDEs/Ag Sales UCM
31	Crowder College Aggie Day Neosho
31	Southeast District Ag CDEs SEMO, Cape Girardeau

APRIL

2	Southeast District Ag CDEs & FFA LDEs CTCC, Cape Girardeau
2	Southwest District FFA LDEs MSU, Springfield

APRIL

4-5	Southwest District Ag CDEs MSU, Springfield
5	South Central District FFA LDEs & Ag CDEs Rolla
5-6	Northwest District Ag CDEs, NWMSU, Maryville
6	Northeast District Ag CDEs Columbia
7	South Central District Ag CDEs Rolla
25	MU CAFNR College & Career Exploration Day Columbia

MAY

1	Market Steer DNA Validation Due to American Royal
1	MU Interscholastic Events CDE & Orscheln Scholarship Applications Due
10	MU Invitational Agri-Science Fair Columbia
13-14	South Central Spring Farm Fest Cabool
31-3	LEAD Conference for Chapter Officers Regional locations across the state

JUNE

6-10	Missouri AgriBusiness Academy Tour Springfield area
7-9	Public Speaking Academy UCM, Warrensburg
9-7/19	Missouri FFA Camp Rising Sun Kaiser
10-11	Area Officer Institute FFA Camp Rising Sun Kaiser
17-19	HYMAX Academy, FFA Camp Rising Sun Kaiser

MISSOURIFFA.ORG

OFFICER BLOGS • EVENTS CALENDAR

NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION • APPLICATIONS

MO STATE FFA CONVENTION • ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

SCHOLARSHIPS • ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

AG INDUSTRY RESOURCES • CONTESTS

MISSOURI FFA TODAY ONLINE

PLUS MUCH MORE



SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT >>



FCS FINANCIAL

Growing Relationships. Creating Opportunities.™

A FARM CREDIT COOPERATIVE

"FCS Financial is always looking for new ways to reach Missouri's ag youth. The Missouri FFA website is a great resource for us to share our products and services that are designed specifically for them."

- Amy Wieberg, FCS Financial

Contact us to learn how you or your organization can support Missouri FFA online...info@missouriffa.org

MISSOURI FFA'S ONLINE COMMUNICATION CENTRAL

After its debut at the 2013 Missouri FFA Convention,

www.missouriffa.org has experienced almost

16,000 UNIQUE VISITORS and nearly **70,000 PAGEVIEWS**.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU >>

www.missouriffa.org is the online hub for all things Missouri FFA. We hope the site is a useful tool for you and your chapters, and love to hear your comments.

In addition to being an informational resource, the site is about YOU - send snapshots of your chapter activities and accomplishments for a chance to be included on the site. Email your comments and photos to info@missouriffa.org.

CONNECT WITH US >>

facebook.

Missouri FFA
Association

twitter

@missouriffa

Learning the Ropes



The Ag Youth Program at FCS Financial is part of our commitment to Young, Beginning and Small Farmers. The growth and success of agriculture in Missouri including the future producers is important to us; as is guiding them through financial and educational assistance. Contact our lending specialists today to learn more about how we are investing in agriculture's future.

Growing Relationships.
Creating Opportunities.™



FCS FINANCIAL

Growing Relationships. Creating Opportunities.™

— A FARM CREDIT COOPERATIVE —

Find an FCS Financial office near you:

1.800.444.3276

WWW.MYFCSFINANCIAL.COM



- ✓ Open to all Missouri 4-H and FFA members in counties served by FCS Financial.
- ✓ Funds available for qualifying 4-H and FFA projects
- ✓ Repayable within one year, interest free
- ✓ Learn how to keep good, accurate and complete project records

 @fcsfinancial



Another **BIG WIN** at Nationals!



Eleven National Champions!

American Star in Agribusiness

William Maltbie
Burlington FFA Chapter
William has also won 3 national proficiency awards!



National Chapter Award / Model of Innovation Chapter Development Division

Abbie Newman, Bayli Hyde and
Sadie Collins
Burlington FFA Chapter



National Agriscience Fair Division 3: Social Systems

Logan Carter and Wyatt Hancock
Oologah FFA Chapter



Agricultural Issues Forum CDE

1st Place Gold Emblem Team
Holly Barrow, Taylor Chapman, Anna
Crosswhite, Jace Karns, Kaci
Pennington, Addison Themer and
Grant Eaton.



Kingfisher FFA Chapter
***Kingfisher is the 1st Oklahoma
FFA chapter to win this event!***



Horse Evaluation CDE

Trisha Meyer
1st Place Gold Emblem Individual
Locust Grove FFA Chapter



Livestock Evaluation CDE

Sydnee Gerken
1st Place Gold Emblem Individual
Kingfisher FFA Chapter

National Proficiency Awards

Oklahoma had 16 national proficiency finalists and won 5 divisions:

Agricultural Sales – Entrepreneurship

Megan Trantham
Boise City FFA Chapter

Home and/or Community Development

Bayli Hyde
Burlington FFA Chapter

Poultry Production

Leza Stemple
Vinita FFA Chapter

Sheep Production

Kaylee Brunker
Perkins-Tryon FFA Chapter

Turf Grass Management

Blake Goss
Leedey FFA Chapter
***Blake is a two-time National
Proficiency award winner!***

Oklahoma FFA Association

National FFA Hunger Challenge State Champions

Tyson Foods delivered a truck load of food to our two Regional Food Banks in Oklahoma!

100% Membership State

27,154 Members

Increase in Membership State

Increase of 1,602

Blue Coat to White Coat

A Golden Opportunity for FFA Members



It's a serious problem for rural Oklahoma: One fourth of the physicians in our state are over the age of 65 and many of them will be retiring soon. In rural Oklahoma there is already a shortage of primary care doctors and that shortage is getting worse. Fortunately, FFA members are stepping up to address that problem.

In high school, Baylee Brown was a member of the Coweta FFA chapter. She held several offices at the chapter level including secretary, reporter and president. Today, she is one of many former FFA members who are medical students at OSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine in Tulsa.

Baylee is a participant in the Blue Coat to White Coat program, a partnership between OSU and Oklahoma FFA that encourages FFA members to pursue careers in medicine, especially in rural communities. She told us the program gives her motivation and helps her define her goals. "This program lays out a road map for students to succeed in their dream of becoming a physician."

Baylee said her FFA background gives her a big advantage in medical school. "Through FFA I developed into the ambitious person I am today. I would set my goals -- learning my speech, working harder with my animals, becoming chapter president -- and I worked hard to succeed; just like I did to get into medical school."

The Blue Coat to White Coat program reaches out to FFA members in high school, providing information about careers in medicine, advising them about what courses to take in high school and college, and providing financial and other incentives to pursue a medical career. The director of the program is Dr. Kayse Shrum, president of the OSU Center for Health Sciences and dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Dr. Shrum says the purpose of the Blue Coat to White Coat program is to serve rural and underserved Oklahoma and to attract high quality students, train them and get them out in the workforce. "We want graduates who want to be primary care physicians, who want to serve their communities, who want to be in rural parts of our state," she said. We have to find students who have those qualities. That's the effort here: focus on the qualities we're looking for and give those students a pathway to get here."

The Blue Coat to White Coat program focuses on FFA members because Dr. Shrum believes that "FFA students understand the value of teamwork. They understand leadership. They have the work ethic that it takes to be successful in medical school. They understand the commitment of caring for others and that sometimes it is not convenient, but it is a responsibility. They learn that through many of their projects in FFA. So they are ideal students."

"We love FFA and the values it brings to our medical school."

Students in this program can take advantage of some very substantial financial incentives. According to Dr. Shrum, "We have an early admissions program that students can apply to during their sophomore year of college. If they're accepted, they'll begin medical school after their junior year. Once those students complete their first year of medical school, those credits will transfer back and they'll get their bachelor's degree. We also have scholarship programs for those students for their junior year."

Another incentive could be even more significant. The average debt of someone who goes through medical school is about \$180,000. "There are programs now for physicians that will repay their student loans if they practice in a rural part of the state. To be able to start a practice doing what you love and know your loans are being paid for every year -- that is huge."

Though it is still in its early stages, the program appears to be a big success. Of the current cohort of 1st year medical students in Tulsa, 25% are former FFA members. That may explain why Bailey Brown says the OSU College of Medicine feels like family. "OSU is an amazing medical school with great teachers and mentors. My classmates are very kind and everyone is there to see the students succeed."

From FFA Member to Doctor to Admiral

Dr. Robin Osborn is a graduate of the Oklahoma College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery, an award-winning radiologist and a highly decorated officer in the United States Navy. He was recently promoted to Rear Admiral and appointed Commandant of the Ohio Naval Militia by Ohio Governor John Kasich.

He credits much of his professional success to his experience in Oklahoma FFA.

Dr. Osborn grew up outside of Inola. “My brother and I grew up on a farm. We had crops, cattle and pigs and hauled hay and cut firewood. After school we worked, and on weekends we worked. We worked because we knew it needed to be done. That’s how you put food on the table.

“Growing up on a farm teaches you how to work. It teaches you the value of what you do. You’re not going to get ahead unless you work for it. That work ethic continues on, no matter what you’re doing. When you learn on the farm and you grow up that way, it sticks with you. I still work and I still put in ten- and eleven-hour days.”

In high school, Dr. Osborn was very active in his local FFA chapter. He was chapter reporter his junior year and chapter president his senior year.

“Inola was an FFA town. Everybody joined FFA when they were old enough. We had a fairly production-type of FFA chapter, with a lot of welding and shop work. We weren’t really high on the totem pole when it came to leadership.”

But leadership became very important to him after a chance meeting at OSU. He was in Stillwater for a Math Day competition, when he met Bart Brashears.

“He was state FFA president back in the ’73 or ’74 time-frame. I introduced myself to him and he started talking to me and took me over to Farmhouse (fraternity) for lunch. By the time the afternoon was over, he convinced me that I should run for state FFA office. I guess he thought I might be able to do it. I didn’t know any better. The next thing I knew, I was running for Northeast District Vice President, and somehow I won.”

Dr. Osborn was first person from his chapter to run for or be elected to state office. At the end of his year as NE district VP, he ran for state president. He did not win, but was appointed NE District FFA alumni representative. “So I still went to a lot of the functions. Then the next year, the last year I could, I ran for (and won) secretary. I was a junior in college. So by that time, I was moderately more polished, if you will. That was a fun year.”

Dr. Osborn attended Oklahoma State University (Stillwater) from 1974 to 1978. He then began his studies at the Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Tulsa, where he received his Doctor of Osteopathy degree in 1981.



He was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy when he was accepted into medical school and the Navy paid his way through school. He was deferred from active duty to do his 1-year internship and 3-year residency in Tulsa and two 1-year fellowships in Chicago. He then went to San Diego Naval Hospital and served three years (active duty) in the Navy. He was recalled to active duty after the attacks on September 11, 2001. He retired from the naval reserve in 2006 and is currently a radiologist in private practice.

Dr. Osborn said FFA put him in a position where he could do things like public speaking, and that dovetailed right into his military and professional careers. “You’re always up in front of people and talking, going to meet with government representatives and that kind of thing. FFA, which puts you in a spotlight and makes you think on your feet...that’s where it all started.

“The big thing about FFA is it got me started. Everybody needs something to set them apart a little bit, and for me, that was FFA. That was the foundation that everything else was built upon. You get that good start and that leg up that gets you going in a certain direction, you get some momentum and inertia going—that has carried me through for all these years. Everything has worked out pretty well.”

It has, indeed. We’re very proud of Dr. Osborn’s professional success and his military service and we’re happy to have him as a role model for all members of Oklahoma FFA.

Amplify

2016

Boost your impact



Jane Jenkins Herlong
Keynote Speaker



Kelly Barnes
Kick-Off Speaker



Cody Johnson
Convention Concert

State Convention

Tuesday and Wednesday, April 26 and 27
Cox Convention Center, Oklahoma City



Peterson Farm Bros
Farmers Feed the World

**Your State
Officer Team**



Taylor Mason
Career Show Tuesday

Heidi Schwartz
Career Show Wednesday



T
h
a
n
k
s

t
o

o
u
r

T
i
t
l
e

S
p
o
n
s
o
r
s



I am

interested in more than
just cows and tractors

learning to be
a great leader

proud to be
living to serve

a future member of a co-op that shares my values

Electric co-ops are different. We have pride in our local community and support people who live here. Why? Because we live here too. We exist for one purpose: to provide members the best service possible in order to help our community thrive. We put our **Members First**.



**Oklahoma's
Electric Cooperatives**

Powering the needs of new generations.



www.MembersFirst.coop

Keep your *Passion.* Change Your *Colors.*



Each day in Oklahoma State University's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, the highly regarded FFA principles of service, hard work and community are combined with top-notch training for a wide range of careers. Students just like you from across the country get hands-on experience with award-winning faculty members. A team that leads with the same set of core FFA values you count on.

CASNR believes in the value of hands-on education and the importance of a well-rounded student experience. With 16 majors and 62 study options, plus more than 60 student organizations, the college is committed to expanding minds and inspiring purpose.

We invite you to explore the opportunities within one of our nine departments including landscape architecture, animal science, biosystems engineering and more. There's a place for you in the CASNR family.

College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources

136 Agricultural Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078 | 405.744.5395 | casnr@okstate.edu

www.casnr.okstate.edu    [OSUCASNR](https://twitter.com/OSUCASNR)





PSO's Tulsa Power Station serves as a backdrop for Cale Jahn, State FFA Secretary (left); Kalee Horn, Central District Vice President; Markel Harris, Northeast District Vice President; and Hallie Barnes, State FFA Reporter, during a visit to the power plant.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF OKLAHOMA IS PROUD TO SPONSOR OKLAHOMA FFA.

A Powerful Partnership In Growing Future Leaders.



A unit of American Electric Power

Vision of Virginia

SPRING 2016



Unleash
Passion
Purpose
Ambition
Potential
Knowledge
Success
Release
Growth
Interests



UNLOCK

FEATURES

C: Virginia FFA Theme - UNLOCK!

D: Behind the Scenes

F: State Fair

H: National Convention

J: Advisor Highlight

K: Member Spotlights

L: Through the Lens

N: FFA Then & Now

P: Chapter Chats

P: VA FFA Foundation Highlight

OFFICERS

President **Chandler Vaughan**

Vice President **Cailin Orgen**

Vice President **Cayla Mutschler**

Vice President **Emily Moyers**

Secretary **Hunter Wimmer**

Treasurer **Mary Ott**

Reporter **Bethany Gochenour**

Sentinel **John-Robert Helsley**

VIRGINIA STATE OFFICE

Email: ffa@vt.edu

Phone: 540-231-3823

Fax: 540-231-3824

Address:

Virginia FFA Association

266 Litton Reaves Hall

Virginia Tech

Blacksburg, VA 24061-0343

www.VaFFA.org



Get Published! Submit articles and photos of your chapter to vaffa.publications@gmail.com, or complete the Chapter Feature Form on the Virginia FFA website.

Upcoming Events

February 20-27:

National FFA Week

March 5:

State Parliamentary Procedure

March: 18

State Meats CDE

March 18-19:

Block and Bridle Livestock and Stockman's

April: 1-3

Virginia Institute of Cooperative Education

April 2:

State Horse Judging CDE

April: 12-13

State Application Judging

April: 15-17

Beef Expo

- State Tractor Driving CDE
- State Stockman's
- State Cattle Working

NEW!

VIRGINIA STAR PROGRAM

We are excited to announce our new program designed to create a sustainable and effective recruitment and retention strategy for agriculture education teachers and agriculture education majors in our state.

First year strategies include (2016):

1. Community College Outreach
2. Teach Ag workshop
3. State program tours
4. Scholarships to attend NAAE
5. Teach Ag webpage <http://www.vaae.info/#!teach-ag/c144t>
6. New Teacher welcome kit
7. Early Career Teachers Conference & Winter In-service



2015-16 Virginia FFA Theme



by Mary Ott

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Treasurer

Deciding on a theme for this year of the Virginia FFA Association all started with answering a question: what is in a word? More specifically, we asked ourselves, “what is a word, or phrase, that we can center our lives around, and use to inspire all FFA members across the Commonwealth of Virginia?”

“Deciding on *Unlock* was a long process, but we believe that it will make an impact on every FFA member that it reaches.”—Chandler

These six letters create a feeling of self-exploration and evaluation of our contribution to our schools, our communities, our FFA chapters and more. We can ask ourselves these questions to better our experience in the FFA. What can we do next? How can we do more? What can we discover in ourselves?

The theme *Unlock* has multiple meanings which can be applied to every area of our lives in very many different ways. FFA is a key to our lives, because we can use it to open doors and make an impact on our friends, families, and communities. We can *unlock* our knowledge through the activities we participate in, such as Career Development Events (CDEs), Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAEs), chapter meetings and events, State Convention and National Convention!

FFA mission statement: FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. We wanted to make the most of that statement this year, and *unlock* our potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success. How would we do this? We thought about how our theme could impact the lives of students across the state.

In the FFA, we promote premier leadership by breaking through the barriers in our lives: physical and mental. By *unlocking* our potential for leadership, we can, in our schools and communities, make a difference in ourselves and in the lives of others.

Our theme *Unlock* is about being open minded and growing ourselves to be better leaders, teammates and friends. It is also about pushing ourselves farther than we ever have before.

“Our years in FFA were not spent in our comfort zones; they were spent *unlocking* strengths”—Cayla

These strengths are things we gain and may have never known about until we began to strive for more and for better.

“FFA is the key to career opportunities.”—Hunter

With this key we can *unlock* doors we never thought existed. In doing so, we can gain lifelong friendships, educational opportunities, and great insight for future careers. When you *unlock* your opportunities, you not only have what is occurring in that very moment, but also opportunities that can prepare you for a career.

We hope everyone will join us this year in living out each day to *unlock* our ambition, to *unlock* our passion and to *unlock* our purpose. Virginia FFA, we challenge you to *unlock* this year!



Check out the 2015-16 Virginia FFA Theme Release video on Youtube!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=SjhOR8EcgVY

Behind the Scenes

by Mary Ott

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Treasurer

What a whirlwind it has been the past several months as a Virginia State FFA Officer! As a team, we have truly been blessed with so many opportunities to have so much fun serving our members across the state and even the nation!

In September, we traveled to Springfield, Mass., for the Big E where we assisted in contests and cheered on our Virginia competitors! As State President, Chandler had the opportunity to participate in the State President's Internship.

Many of us helped out with contests we had participated in before, and some of us were able to learn about contests we had never done before. It was so much fun helping with the Dairy Evaluation and Livestock Evaluation CDEs. It was especially interesting to see how the Livestock Evaluation was organized on a national level compared to the state level. My experience competing in this contest helped me a lot while assisting the event coordinator, and it was cool to see the contest from the other side: helping instead of participating. There were also three Virginia Officers in the Big E Parade representing Virginia - Emily, John-Robert, and Chandler with the American flag.

"It really made me appreciate all of our freedom that we have as United States' citizens. Even though I carried the Pennsylvania flag, I was able to learn even more about this great nation we live in. I met people that seem so far away at first, but when you get to know them, it is like they are your neighbors." -John-Robert

Virginia was also represented well at the Big E Banquet. Cailin served as the Vice President, Cayla served as the Advisor, and Hunter gave the invocation. They all did very well and helped the banquet run smoothly with announcing CDE winners! The three officers who competed for Virginia at the Big E were Bethany in Environmental/Natural Resources, John-Robert in Livestock Evaluation and Chandler in Extemporaneous Public Speaking.

As State Officers at the State Fair, we had the opportunity to assist in any way with the Career Development Events that were going on. Throughout the week at the fair, we helped out with eight contests, such as Forestry Field Day and Horticulture Demonstration. Our duties ranged from tabulating scores to keeping time and, as some of you saw, we were also able to announce results



at the end of each day! It was really fun to go behind the scenes of contests I had never done before, like the Ag Demo and Forestry Field Day. I liked learning about the contests and meeting new people as they competed! Many thanks go out to all the coordinators, sponsors and helpers for these contests throughout the week!

At the end of October, we all had the opportunity to travel to Louisville, Ky., for the largest National FFA event. Virginia FFA had 7 delegates representing them in 6 committees during the 88th National FFA Convention. Delegates arrived in Louisville a few days in advance to prepare for committee work and meet the other delegates. Delegate duties included attending delegate committee meetings, preparing legislative testimony, which is basically a document with suggestions about things to change or add to the FFA Manual, and participating in business sessions by voting and offering our opinions on different topics. The committee topics were chosen at the State Presidents' Conference in July 2015.

Committee 1. Increasing Graduate Communication and Engagement

Committee 2. Increased Awards and Recognition Opportunities for Younger Members

Committee 3. Enhancing Leadership Development Opportunities for All Members

Committee 4. Strategies to Increase FFA Participation

Committee 5. Evaluation of the Delegate Process

Committee 6. Clarifying Official Dress and Related Policies

In each of these committees we were able to offer our opinions on what things could be added to or changed in the FFA Manual. Some of us even participated in debates and conversations to come up with new ideas and make



sure the best things were happening for Virginia FFA. Hunter and Chandler were Virginia's representatives at the State Presidents' conference and were able to serve on Delegate committees. Hunter served as a committee Sentinel, and Chandler represented Virginia as a committee chair!

"Serving as a delegate committee chair was an honor. I really enjoyed overseeing the process that increased FFA participation. When serving as committee chair, I realized even more how the National FFA Organization is a student run organization!" -Chandler

The team was also able to participate in the National Day of Service, where we put together pamphlets to raise awareness for hunger and helped set up the booth for "Taking Aim against Hunger."

After our service project, we talked with the coordinators of this outreach program and got informational materials about hunger and promotions for their program that we can share with Virginia FFA! Later that evening, as some may have seen, we also know how to keep up with the beat of the music and got to show off our dancing skills. From a delicious dinner to awesome dancing and music to catching up with old friends and making new ones, we had an awesome time seeing members and appreciate the crew of the last true Mississippi River steamboat still in operation, the Belle of Louisville, for their generous hospitality and excitement throughout the evening.

Earlier in October, the Agriculture Education Society (AES) Conferences were held at Virginia's two land grant universities: Virginia Tech and Virginia State. At both conferences, we had workshops in order to increase awareness of hunger in our communities and across the world. We facilitated activities with students centered around hunger facts, such as 385 million people living on less than a dollar a day. We then tried to figure out

how we could solve these issues. Everyone left thinking of new ways they could accomplish our goal to stomp out hunger in their schools and communities.

Another conference we were able to participate in is called COLT. Chapter Officer Leadership Training (COLT) is a conference for each area where State Officers have the opportunity to teach about different leadership techniques, the importance of being a leader, the types of leaders and how to communicate effectively. These conferences are a lot of fun and very beneficial to each participant, because we learn different ways to be effective leaders, and then, we are able to apply them in our home chapters and communities.

To make sure we are all on track and making the best decisions for the next steps of Virginia FFA, the team met with staff for a weekend in December. We discussed the chapter visits we have done so far, and hope to do in the future, banquet visits, and we even started planning the 90th Virginia FFA State Convention! We hope everyone is getting excited, because we sure are!

Throughout everything happening this year, we are able to have the most fun with the best FFA members around with chapter visits! We each have a different perspective of chapter visits and how we want to get more people involved. I have been to many different chapters all across the state to facilitate different workshops. The workshop I have facilitated the most deals with Communication and Teamwork, in which students are able to learn about communicating effectively and working together to better themselves, better each other and improve the chapter in their own unique way. Some other really cool workshops are 'FFA Basics' and 'FFA on the Go'. These workshops are centered on the importance of FFA in the agriculture industry. They are all about how we can learn more to be involved more to be able to teach more!

"Rolling down the highway during the early mornings to head to a chapter visit I only have one thought: "What am I going to do today?" This is not a to-do list or an agenda for my day, rather it is an opportunity to potentially change students' lives. Being able to facilitate workshops ranging from Communication to AGvocating to FFA Basics has helped me make an impact on the members by sharing my experiences and making connections with them." -John-Robert

There is an online State Officer Request form if you and your chapter are interested in a visit!

2015 State Fair of Virginia



by John-Robert Helsley

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Sentinel

The State Fair of Virginia was held from September 25 through October 4 at the birthplace of Secretariat, The Meadow Event Park in Doswell, Va. Virginia FFA members braved the extremely rainy weather to travel to the State Fair and compete in a variety of Career Development Events ranging from Horticulture Demonstration to Forestry Field Day and Tractor Troubleshooting. In these Career Development Events, or CDEs, FFA members had the opportunity

to exhibit their knowledge and skill in particular fields of agriculture that they had been preparing for a plethora of time. Also, attendees were able to enjoy all of the different things that the fair had to offer. I remember attending the State Fair from an early age and I have to say that there is always something new and exciting happening at the State Fair. Unfortunately, the remainder of the State Fair had to be put on halt do to occurring inclement weather.

UNLOCK

WRITE
Virginia FFA
Foundation
P.O. Box 185
Christiansburg,
VA 24068

EMAIL
donate@vaffa.org

DONATE
to the Virginia
FFA Foundation

VISIT
vaffafoundation.org

[@virginiaffa](https://www.facebook.com/virginiaffa) [@virginiaffa](https://twitter.com/virginiaffa) [@virginiaffa](https://www.instagram.com/virginiaffa)

State Fair of Virginia Results

Tractor Trouble Shooting

1st Place – Caleb Rich & Michael Harlan, Lord Botetourt
2nd Place – Austin Dean & Justin Miles, Lee
3rd Place – CJ Paulette & Cody Sams, Appomattox

Small Engine Trouble Shooting

1st Place – Cody Cisco, Randolph-Henry
2nd Place – Ben Fitzgerald, Nelson Senior
3rd Place – Jonathan Woodson, King William

Jr. Junior Dairywomen's – 4-H/FFA (Team Results)

2nd Place – Elkton Middle
3rd Place – J. Frank Hillyard
5th Place – Elkton Middle

Jr. Junior Dairywomen's – 4-H/FFA (Individual Results)

4th Place – Peyton Fravel, J. Frank Hillyard
7th Place – William Meadows, Elkton Middle
9th Place – Jamison Meadows, Elkton Middle

Sr. Junior Dairywomen's – 4-H/FFA (Team Results)

1st Place – Sherando
2nd Place – Riverheads
3rd Place – Rockbridge County

Sr. Junior Dairywomen's – 4-H/FFA (Individual Results)

2nd Place – Isabelle Leonard, Riverheads
3rd Place – Nicole Masiello, Sherando
4th Place – Bailey McGill, Sherando

Junior Forester's (Team Results)

1st Place – Nelson Senior Team A
2nd Place – Chickahominy Middle
3rd Place – Atlee Team A

Junior Forester's (Individual Results)

1st Place – Noah Fitzgerald, Nelson Senior
2nd Place – Meredith Peters, Chickahominy Middle
3rd Place – Sam Harmon, Atlee

Junior Crops (Team Results)

1st Place – Nelson Middle Team B
2nd Place – Charlotte-Central Middle Team A
3rd Place – Carroll County

Junior Crops (Individual Results)

1st Place – Alexis Martin, Nelson Middle Team B
2nd Place – Nathan Saunders, Nelson Middle Team A
3rd Place – Jacob Tomlin, Nelson Middle Team A

Senior Crops (Team Results)

1st Place – Nelson Senior Team A
2nd Place – Nelson Senior Team B
3rd Place – Randolph-Henry Team A

Senior Crops (Individual Results)

1st Place – Ruth Fitzgerald, Nelson Senior Team A
2nd Place – Phillip Saunders, Nelson Senior Team A
3rd Place – Scott Pugh, Randolph-Henry Team A

Ag. Demo Div. 1

1st Place – Katelyn Graves & Peyton Welch, C.L. Payne
2nd Place – Emily Baker, C.L. Payne
3rd Place – Adam Hanger, Riverheads

Ag. Demo Div. 2

1st Place – Ryan Sensabaugh & Luke Jennings, Riverheads
2nd Place – Hannah Armes & Macy Taylor, Nottoway
3rd Place – Amanda Bryan, Buckingham

Horticulture Demo

1st Place – Kelly Orgen, Sherando
2nd Place – Liz Maddox & Kaitlyn Barber, Brookeville
3rd Place – Alyssa Finley & Kristen Pippin, Louisa

Jr. Forestry Field Day (Team Results)

1st Place – Nelson Middle
2nd Place – Randolph-Henry
3rd Place – Amelia

Sr. Forestry Field Day (Team Results)

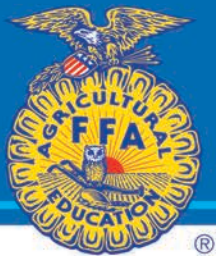
1st Place – Nelson Senior
2nd Place – Randolph-Henry
3rd Place – Alleghany

Agriscience Research Poster (Junior Results)

1st Place – Matthew Blankenship, Tazewell Middle
2nd Place – Bailey McDonald, Robert E. Aylor Middle
3rd Place – Travis Wooten, Powhatan Junior

Agriscience Research Poster (Senior Results)

1st Place – Tiffany Heishman, Strasburg
2nd Place – Morgan Trent & Morgan Keith, Holston
3rd Place – Chelsea Kowall, King George



National Convention

by Cailin Orgen

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Vice President

Once again, FFA members from all over the country traveled to Louisville, Ky., this year for the 88th National FFA Convention. This year's national theme was 'Amplify'. Virginia FFA kicked off convention by setting sail on the historic Belle of Louisville. On the boat, members ate dinner and danced the night away riding along the Ohio River. Throughout the week members attended sessions to listen to guest speakers, retiring addresses of the national officer team, award presentations and much more. There were many, many opportunities for members in the city of Louisville alone, from touring the Louisville Slugger

Factory to visiting Churchill Downs. There were also numerous shows to attend including the rodeo, talent competitions and concerts with Maddie and Tae/Jake Owen and Clare Dunn/Kip Moore. The heart of the convention excitement could be found at the Kentucky Exposition Center and career fair where thousands of members visited booths, networked, and attended workshops. Convention was wrapped up by honoring members that achieved the American FFA Degree and by electing our newly installed National FFA Officer team. This week was filled with excitement, friendships and new opportunities. The National FFA Convention allowed us to convene as leaders to 'Amplify' our futures and ensure the true strength of agriculture and the industry we love so much.

National Convention Results

Virginia FFA was well represented at the National FFA Convention this year. Teams and individuals competed against other members across the nation. Below are the results of how our teams and individuals placed:

GOLD Ranking Teams and Individuals

Dairy Cattle Evaluation and Management

Team from Sherando High School (placing 8th)
Brooke Fletcher of Sherando High School
Nicole Masiello of Sherando High School
Bailey McGill of Sherando High School

Environmental and Natural Resources

Rachel Wooten of Powhatan Senior

Farm Business Management

Team from Fort Defiance (Placing 9th)
Benjamin Garber of Fort Defiance (Placing 1st)
Anna Foley of Fort Defiance
Olivia Heeb of Fort Defiance

Floriculture

Team from Magna Vista (Placing 1st)
Erin Perry of Magna Vista (Placing 2nd)
Bradley Hancock of Magna Vista (Placing 10th)
Whitney Wood of Magna Vista

Forestry

Team from Nelson County (Placing 3rd)
Noah Fitzgerald of Nelson County
Colin Morris of Nelson County
Phillip Saunders of Nelson County (Placing 2nd)

Horse Evaluation

Team from Powhatan Senior (Placing 7th)
Katherine Morton of Powhatan Senior
Caitlin Reamy of Powhatan Senior

Livestock Evaluation

Bailey Hadacek of Buffalo Gap

Meats Evaluation and Technology

Team from Nelson County (Placing 10th)
Trevor Carter of Nelson County
Ruth Fitzgerald of Nelson County

Milk Quality and Products

Team from Riverheads (Placing 8th)
Isabelle Leonard of Riverheads
Rebecca Straley of Riverheads

Nursery/Landscape

Team from Magna Vista (Placing 7th)
Juan Gonzalez of Magna Vista
Haley Warren of Magna Vista
Dianna Winn of Magna Vista

SILVER Ranking Teams and Individuals

Agriculture Communication

Team from Fort Defiance
Leah Crickenberger of Fort Defiance
Autumn Garber of Fort Defiance

Agricultural Sales

Jordan Fisher of Nottoway

Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems

Easton Foster of Turner Ashby

Agronomy

Kelsey Fitzgerald of Nelson County Middle

Dairy Cattle Evaluation and Management

David Ames of Sherando High School

Dairy Cattle Handlers' Activity

Mykah Smith of Central

Environmental and Natural Resources

Jared West of Powhatan Senior

Extemporaneous Public Speaking

Austin Weaver of Strasburg

Farm Business Management

Jacob Lewis of Fort Defiance

Floriculture

Mariah Devins of Magna Vista

Food Science and Technology

Team from Broadway FFA
Leah Brumback of Broadway
Michaela Loving of Broadway
Kaylee Seekford of Broadway

Forestry

Brandy Campbell of Nelson County

Horse Evaluation

Lindsey Watson of Powhatan Senior

Livestock Evaluation

Team from Buffalo Gap
Simon Liggett of Buffalo Gap
Cole Reeves of Buffalo Gap

Meats Evaluation and Technology

Deightan McClellan of Nelson County
Elizabeth Sites of Nelson County

Milk Quality and Products

Jennifer Callison of Riverheads
Ryan Fitzgerald of Riverheads

Nursery/Landscape

Charquise Smith-Stultz of Magna Vista

Parliamentary Procedure

Team from Lord Botetourt

Poultry Evaluation

Team from East Rockingham
Jacob Phillips of East Rockingham
Melissa Ruhlman of East Rockingham
Jacob Shifflett of East Rockingham

Veterinary Science

Diana Corra of Riverbend
Lauren Dix of Riverbend
Mary Lynch of Riverbend

BRONZE Ranking Teams and Individuals

Agriculture Issues

Team from Magna Vista

Agricultural Sales

Team from Nottoway
Seth Campbell of Nottoway
William Foster of Nottoway
Clarence Hart of Nottoway

Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems

Team from Turner Ashby
Ashton Dove of Turner Ashby
Chris Payne of Turner Ashby
Kenan Smith of Turner Ashby

Agronomy

Team from Nelson County Middle
Cody Adams of Nelson County Middle
Brittany Saunders of Nelson County Middle
Angel Wright of Nelson County Middle

Creed Speaking

Megan Day of Cedar-Lee Junior

Environmental and Natural Resources

Team from Powhatan Senior
Jackson Kieran of Powhatan Senior
Dakota Stroud of Powhatan Senior

Food Science and Technology

Bailey O'Brien of Broadway

Horse Evaluation

Jenna Prater of Powhatan Senior

Job Interview

Chelsea Kowall of King George

Livestock Evaluation

Sam Blackwell of Buffalo Gap

Marketing Plan

Team from Turner Ashby

Poultry Evaluation

Joseph Lam of East Rockingham

Prepared Public Speaking

Davis Fenster of James River

Veterinary Science

Team from Riverbend

***Congratulations to all our teams who represented Virginia!
Way to unlock your talents and put them to use!***

Advisor Highlight

Mrs. Teresa Lindberg

Advisor - E.W. Wyatt Middle School FFA

Mrs. Teresa Lindberg is the agriculture education teacher at E.W. Wyatt Middle School in Emporia, Va. Her program resembles most middle schools, however her greenhouse, small animals, including a rabbit and chinchilla, and her love for teaching set her apart. Fortunately, I was able to ask her some questions about her career as an agriculture educator and FFA advisor.



Q: Why did you choose to teach Agriculture Education?

A: "I got started in this occupation because I was inspired by my FFA Advisor. My advisor always encouraged me to do my best and didn't allow anything or anyone to stop me from fulfilling my goals. The lessons I learned in my high school agricultural class, I still use today, not because I am an agricultural education teacher, but because they are relevant to many aspects of everyday life. In addition, my advisor challenged

me constantly by asking me to go beyond my "comfort zone". As an introvert, I had to learn how to handle the stress of competitions, overcome my fear of public speaking, and how to work together as part of a team. Eventually, I became extremely active in FFA and it was his unending words of encouragement, the hours he spent training teams and individuals for CDE's, speeches, and applications, that opened doors that otherwise

would have been closed to me.

I also wanted to foster a lifelong desire to learn and provide students with the skills they need to reach their full potential. Therefore, becoming an Agricultural Education teacher seemed a good fit because not only would I have the opportunity to help students realize their dreams, I get to work in the fields I love, Agriculture and Education."

Q: What are the highlights of your career?

A: "Highlights, this one is a tough one because there have been many. I will identify three: my first highlight is earning the Honorary American FFA Degree and then travelling to the National FFA Convention to accept that award and having two of my students go across stage to accept our chapter's National Chapter Award. My second one is near and close to my heart. My school division only has a middle school Agricultural Education Program and an FFA chapter. So basically, no matter how active the FFA members are in the middle school there is no

place for them to continue. Well, I had some members who wanted to continue the program. So with some determination and a lot of work we (my students and I) were able to work out a plan with the Department of Education and the Virginia State FFA executive secretary, and the National FFA organization to offer an option to those members who wanted to continue their FFA experience. The students had to have an SAE, conduct an agriculture plan, pay their FFA dues and serve as the Junior Advisor for the FFA Chapter. As a result I have had

FFA members earn their State FFA Degree, win proficiency awards, compete in Career Development Events and earn their American FFA Degree. To me, this is amazing dedication and fortitude because our campuses are not nearby and they had to find a way to come to the middle school, be dedicated to their goals, and fulfill their obligations. My last highlight is being selected to be the Virginia Agriculture Leaders Obtaining Results inaugural class fellow and graduating from the program."

Q: What would you say to someone interested into going into the Agriculture Education field?

A: “If you have an interest to be an agricultural education teacher I would first recommend that you do your research and see first-hand what it means. Go see a variety of programs—not just the local program but a variety of different areas. If it is possible ask to shadow the teacher/advisor. Volunteer to give yourself a clearer picture because there are so many facets of this occupation. Once you have “done your research” and still want to be an agricultural education teacher, I would say go for it!”



Q: Do you have any tips for new Agriculture teachers or FFA advisors?

A: “I have a couple tips for new Agricultural Education teachers or FFA advisors. My first tip is to find an agricultural education teacher mentor. It really needs to be a fellow agricultural education teacher. When you are selecting a mentor consider the following:

- Look for a person in the agricultural education profession that has experience and the wisdom to help you.
- Pick a person you can really talk to and you feel comfortable enough to ask those “difficult” questions.
- Pick someone you respect and value their input, suggestions, feedback (positive or negative), and advice.

Also, ask for help! Even if you could learn everything available today, tomorrow there will be new information. So ask and ask until you find what you need or want!

Lastly, don't try to do everything. You will want to and sometimes you may even try to do everything but honestly this is when we crash or leave the profession all together. In these moments, talk to your mentor, figure out your strengths, your priorities and your goals, and then make a plan. You might just have to make some tough choices, but in the long run, your program will benefit, your students will benefit and most importantly you will benefit.”

Member Spotlights

Dalton Markley

Dalton Markley is a seventh grade FFA member of the W. R. Legge FFA Chapter at Frederick County Middle School. Dalton is an active member who attends all FFA meetings and events. He recently participated in his first CDE, the Massanutten Federation Agriscience Mechanics contest. He helped his team earn a second place finish, and he was the third high individual in the contest. Dalton is a member of the school band, and is also part of the ministry at Truth Chapel in Spartanburg, where he has his own radio program.

Luis Urias-Miranda

Luis Urias-Miranda is a seventh grade FFA member of James Wood Middle FFA, serving as chapter vice president. Luis participated in his first CDE this fall, the Massanutten Federation Quiz Bowl Event. Luis was the 5th high individual in the contest. He is also planning to participate in the Food and Fiber CDE. Luis is a member of the men's choir at his school, and he also plays soccer for Blue Ridge Youth Soccer. He hopes to pursue a career in agriculture related to technology.

Lucy Ferrulli

Lucy Ferrulli is a seventh grade FFA member, and the president of the James Wood Middle FFA. Lucy is a great leader, and she represented her chapter at the National FFA Convention this year. Lucy is also a member of the school basketball team, and she plays the flute in the school band. Lucy is also very active in her church and community.

Through the Lens of a State Officer



by Chandler Vaughan

VA FFA 2015-2016 State President

I live in a county where, if you are going anywhere, you're probably going to have to travel down a dirt road. Whether the destination is a farm, that perfect hunting spot, or your home far off the beaten path, seeing the dust fly in the rear view mirror is just a part of everyday life. Even if we don't live near them, we hear about those less traveled paths all the time through country music songs like Jason Aldean's "Dirt Road Anthem" or Kip Moore's "Dirt Road". Maybe there's something special about them. The sandy grit and loose gravel may provide an escape to another, rural world for some. For me though, it's still

just another part of life. The thing I notice the most is the "End State Maintenance" road sign. It provides a warning that you're venturing off the well traveled road and into the less taken path. The simple three word message explains that if you don't have the right vehicle, you probably need to turn around.

We've probably all heard the expression "step out of your comfort zone," maybe even from your FFA Advisor. We are always challenged by those six words, possibly through public speaking, a Career Development Event, or even making new friends at FFA events. The challenge, to step out, reminds me of that "End State Maintenance" sign. Both provide that warning that we are about to set foot into uncharted territory. Just as we have to take the right vehicle to travel on these roads, we must have the right preparation to step outside our comfort zone. The practices, the trial runs, doing something different, are all great examples of the 'vehicles' that can help us to get out of our comfort zones. It is always up to us though to take the next step. Will you make the effort to win that CDE? Will you talk to that person that you didn't know before today? Prepare for adventure Virginia FFA! Are you going to take the dirt road?

by Cailin Orgen

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Vice President

Life is about making memories. Sometimes it's the little moments that make the best memories, moments that don't seem like much at the time. When I was in eighth grade, my officer team and I became very close. We had been friends all throughout middle school, but our time as officers was coming to a close. We were heading to high school, but we had one last trip to take together at state convention. One afternoon we bought a basketball and wandered around campus. We played basketball on several different courts throughout campus while we explored and just enjoyed each other's company. At the end of that day we all signed the basketball and gave it to our advisors. I had completely forgotten about that day until I visited my middle school last year. Seeing that basketball brought

back all of those amazing memories my team and I made. It seemed like a pretty typical day, but I found that I made some of my most treasured memories as an FFA member that day.

That signed basketball has a story and it has value that other people may not see. Sometimes we see value in simple-everyday things that trigger our fond memories. I challenge you not to take anything for granted and to find value in the simplest things. Think about what brings back happy memories. Maybe a song, phrase or object can trigger memories you may have forgotten. We should want to explore our memories and remember all of our amazing adventures because we may not realize it, but these memories help make us who we are.



by Hunter Wimmer

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Secretary

One of my favorite things to do is to just take a walk in the woods, especially in the fall when all the leaves are changing colors. While I was walking through the woods one day, trying to find a good place to hunt during rifle season I stumbled across this big spruce tree and got me to thinking how amazing these trees are. They are green all year long no matter how hot or how cold it gets, they always seem to stick out in a patch of woods, they all point straight up instead of branching out, and the best ones are moved indoors and decorated during Christmas. Even though they are still trees they are special in their own way. Both types of trees have the same roots, leaves, and trunks but for some reason they are different. This made me realize that as FFA members we should shoot to be an Evergreen tree. Instead of losing your leaves when the cold hits you need to keep smiling and keep your color. When you are surrounded by change, stand out for what you believe in. And when reaching for your goals don't branch out and go in different directions, aim for the sun and go as high as you can. If you don't reach the sun, you will still be higher than before. When you keep your color, stand out in a crowd, and grow straight up and reach for the sky, one day you will be decorated and taken somewhere where you will be rewarded for being you. Virginia FFA I challenge you to stand out, and be yourself.





by Cayla Mutschler

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Vice President

"The promise of better days through better ways", every time I hear those words I think of the obstacles people face every day. Yet they still have a smile on their face and would do anything you asked them to. We are all going to have hard days where we don't know what our purpose is or why we keep doing the things we do. One day I was back home and my mom had asked me to go get some milk from Walmart. I was in the dairy aisle when I saw an envelope with a card on the milk jug I was about to pick up. I opened it and the card read "remember what you do is important". Wow! What an awesome feeling for someone that I didn't know to tell me my work was important. That wasn't the only card in the store. I saw a woman placing the cards all over the store. I walked over to her and asked why she was doing this? She said "I had a hard week last week and this is what I do, so I can bring joy to someone else's day". Virginia FFA if you want better days let's unlock the better ways. Keep bringing joy to strangers' lives and stay forever blue.

by Bethany Gochenour

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Reporter

Don't be afraid of being different; be afraid of being the same as everyone else. Just like this tree is standing way above the others, we must always remember that we each bring our unique talents and strengths to everything that we do. If all the trees were the same, what would be the purpose of having forests? The same goes for us. If all of our chapter members had the same interests, values, or background, how would we have a unique experience in the FFA? Each and every one of us has the ability to use our different abilities and ideas to make our FFA chapters work successfully. Simply reflecting on ourselves can allow us to find our true purpose.



by Emily Moyers

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Vice President

As the sun comes up, it signifies sometimes to appreciate the beauty of what life really has to offer. You have to step back and observe for a minute. At the top of a mountain the view is going to be completely different from the bottom. At the top of the mountain you are able to see the things that were right in front of you at the bottom, but missed. Life is much like the mountain. You may go through everyday life and take for granted what is right in front of you. Most opportunities in life are right in front of you, but you can not see them. Sometimes you have to step back, climb that mountain, and appreciate the view. Virginia FFA, don't miss what is right in front of you, step back, observe, and unlock your potential.

by John-Robert Helsley

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Sentinel

Looking out over the hills, there is a lot to take in at first. From the clear sky with puffy, white cumulus clouds, to the beautiful, lush green forage with rolling hills. Looking deeper into the moment reveals opportunities in front of us. Millions of years ago, these hills started their formation as natural occurrences happened. Over time, these hills were shaped and now they appear in front of us. Each and every day we awaken from a restful state to a world full of opportunities and decisions to be made.

As individuals, the opportunities we take and the decisions we make help shape us to who we are. Potentially not



by Mary Ott

VA FFA 2015-2016 State Treasurer

Everyone I know thinks rainbows are beautiful, and most people think the rain is dreary and gloomy. What we don't think about is how they are connected: we cannot have rainbows without rain. We have to go through the gloomier times to be able to appreciate the beautiful works of nature. Sometimes we forget to be hopeful for the future, because we think we will just be let down in the long run. Of course, we cannot expect everyone to be positive all the time; we are all human. I catch myself sometimes thinking negatively for no reason, and after realizing this, I always wonder why. It is human nature to be affected by negative situations, but it takes an especially strong person and leader to be able to go through negative situations with a positive attitude. I strive to be that strong person and leader, and I hope to help those around me do the same. Take the initiative to be the strong person; be the light people use to get through dark times. Encourage others to find their light, and hopefully become the light for those around them. There will be a rainbow after the rain, we just have to find it.

grasping an opportunity will allow it to fall through the cracks and disappear. Sometimes decisions made may appear flawless on the surface, but upon further evaluation we realize this may not be the case. As people, we have to make decisions on what we want to do and which opportunities to take. As FFA members, we are able to participate in opportunities that could potentially lead to career success, have out-of-school projects that help us grow as a person, and the ability to take charge of events to help us develop our highest degree of leadership ability. We just have to decide on which opportunities to take and what new opportunities we are wanting to try. Virginia FFA, it is time to *Unlock!*



FFA Then & Now



Cindy Blaha

The National FFA Organization spans generations, and Cindy Blaha is one living testimony.

A second generation FFA member, she first made her mark as the first female member in her own chapter in Dinwiddie. She had an ideal perfect childhood – gaining a strong work ethic and developing a passion for agriculture and love for the family farm at a young age. Growing up around angus cattle, chickens, and pigs – the family farm still continues today. Her grandparents, first generation Americans immigrating from Czechoslovakia, laid a strong foundation. Today she continues to work the family farm and watch the next generation.

But life at school was a little different. In those days, it was customary that the girls were steered toward home economics and the boys toward vocational classes. Having grown up going to the stock yards, she knew all the farm boys in the area. Even knowing lots of people in the high school, she knew that home ec was not where she wanted to be. She insisted on taking an ag class and her guidance counselor put her in one with no objections. The first girl in the history of her county to take an agriculture class, Cindy Blaha joined the FFA in 1976. In fact, she walked in to warm arms and confesses to feeling very receptive from teachers and the boys. The classes in those days focused on traditional ag production courses and even horticulture and landscaping. Over time she earned both her Greenhand and Chapter Degrees and completed her SAE project in beef cattle production and home improvement and landscaping. Eventually she became the first female officer in her chapter, Secretary – by that time another girl had joined the ranks.



However, she couldn't compete or be on any teams, for no other girl had any interest and females weren't encouraged to do the competitions or other events, like state convention. So, while she never competed in contests, she was still active with the chapter and local events. She never went to a state convention until she became an Advisor. But the lessons she gained through the FFA have lasted a lifetime.

Virginia Tech was the only college she applied to and planned to attend. After coming to visit Blacksburg when she was just eight years old, her mind was set and her heart was sold. She had dreamed of becoming a veterinarian, but struggled through tears with college chemistry and could never overcome that hurdle. Her parents encouraged her to consider switching to Ag Education. But her advisor wanted her to choose a pathway with a more positive job outlook. Having the courage to make the switch she completed her student teaching at Pulaski. When she finally graduated she still did not want to teach. With hardly any time to reconsider, she received a job offer from Southern States before she even graduated. Thus

began a journey of over four years in Mechanicsville in ag sales and even in manager training.

But a phone call from her former advisors one day changed her course. With there being a need back home and after some encouragement, she agreed to fill in as an agriculture teacher back at her home chapter. Originally stating that she would only stay for five years of life (because she didn't want to make a career out of it), she has been there ever since. At the time there were only



two other female agriculture teachers in the state. Today she is still one, and is fortunate to have her own daughter Laurel Bishop as a fellow ag teacher in Dinwiddie County.

Looking back over the years, FFA is a much different landscape now than it was in her day. There are so many more opportunities for women, with it being an even more diverse and faster paced organization. She readily admits that it is even more leadership oriented and provides bigger travel opportunities and networking experiences for all.

Whenever she talks to a student who is on the fence about taking an agriculture class or joining the FFA she tells them to not let what you

think is a stereotype hold you back. There is something in the FFA for everyone; there will be something that will interest you. With the hundreds of careers that are connected to agriculture you are very hard pressed to not relate back to a skill that you learned in class or the FFA.

She admits that she is as passionate about ag and the industry as she was when she was a child growing up. "It is the best industry there is – it has the most opportunities for members and students." But you cannot sit back and watch it happen. You must step up and be willing to take a risk and trust your peers that are in it and advisor that tell you can do this. You need to trust your mentors that they are not going to fail you and believe them when they say you can do it."

Twenty-nine years later and she never imagined this is where she would be today. Her dad was right – being an agriculture teacher is where she needed to be. But she's not sorry it took her a little while to realize that, for some of the experiences at Southern States were valuable in leading her to where she was meant to be. Every single day she works hard and lives to make



sure that her family farm can survive and thrive. It is because of them that she does that and hopes to instill the same spark in her grandchildren. She uses every opportunity to experience agriculture on her family farm. Six years ago, their hard work was awarded in the family farm being named the Century Farm by the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is not about the money or awards but rather tie to the land and heritage that is long lasting and has allowed Cindy Blaha to make her mark in Virginia Agriculture and the FFA.





Chapter Chats

Stuffing Stockings with Strasburg FFA



The Strasburg FFA chapter is having a busy, yet great year. Their members have been attending their monthly meetings, participating in State Soils CDE, in which they placed first, and hosting several community service projects. With Christmas being right around the corner Strasburg FFA has been working to help those in need. This project, they call The Empty Stocking project, is something their chapter has been participating in for many years.

"The empty stocking fund is one of my favorite projects throughout the year. I really enjoy being able to give Christmas presents to those who may or may not wake up on Christmas with presents under their tree," said Nathan McDonald, vice president of the Strasburg FFA chapter.

Through The Empty Stocking, Strasburg FFA helps to provide a Christmas to remember for those who may not have a Christmas this year. Their local Ruritan Club provides the funds to shop for items such as clothing, school supplies, and of course toys. Strasburg FFA does the shopping and the wrapping for this project.

They also participate in Adopt-A-Senior, a project that benefits the senior citizens in the community that are in need of some common essentials. Strasburg agriculture classes and FFA members work diligently to raise the money for this need in their community, so that their senior citizens will have all the things they need.

"Wrapping items such as lotion and soap seems like so little to us," said Miley Hupp, member of the Strasburg FFA chapter. "To senior citizens participating in the Adopt-A-Senior program, it means so much more than that."

As the year progresses, Strasburg FFA remains busy with various CDEs, community development, and several other chapter projects.



Living to Serve.



VIRGINIA
FFA FOUNDATION

With a mission to provide resources that enhance Agricultural Education and inspire premier leadership, personal growth, and career success for FFA members, the Virginia FFA Foundation's Board of Directors serves to ensure that the future of agriculture is bright. They are an example of FFA's motto in action: Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, **Living to Serve**.

Many thanks to the dedicated business and industry leaders, educators, and agriculturalists who serve on the Virginia FFA Foundation's Board of Directors:

Mr. Robert Andrews
Colonial Farm Credit

Mrs. Laurel Bishop
Dinwiddie County High School

Dr. Larry Case
Retired, National FFA Advisor

Mr. Dana Fisher
Virginia Farm Bureau

Mr. Kern Houff
Houff's Feed and Fertilizers Inc.

Mr. Zach Jacobs
Immediate Past FFA President

Mr. Scot Lilly, Chair
Farm Credit of the Virginias

Mr. Randy Roller
City National Bank

Mrs. Sarah Scyphers
Holston High School

Mrs. Ethel Showman
Young Farmers of Virginia

Dr. Matt Spindler
Virginia Tech

Mr. Scott Stevens, Secretary
Rockingham Cooperative

Mr. Chandler Vaughn
Virginia FFA President

Mrs. Carly Woolfolk
Virginia Department of Education

