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WINTER 2016-17

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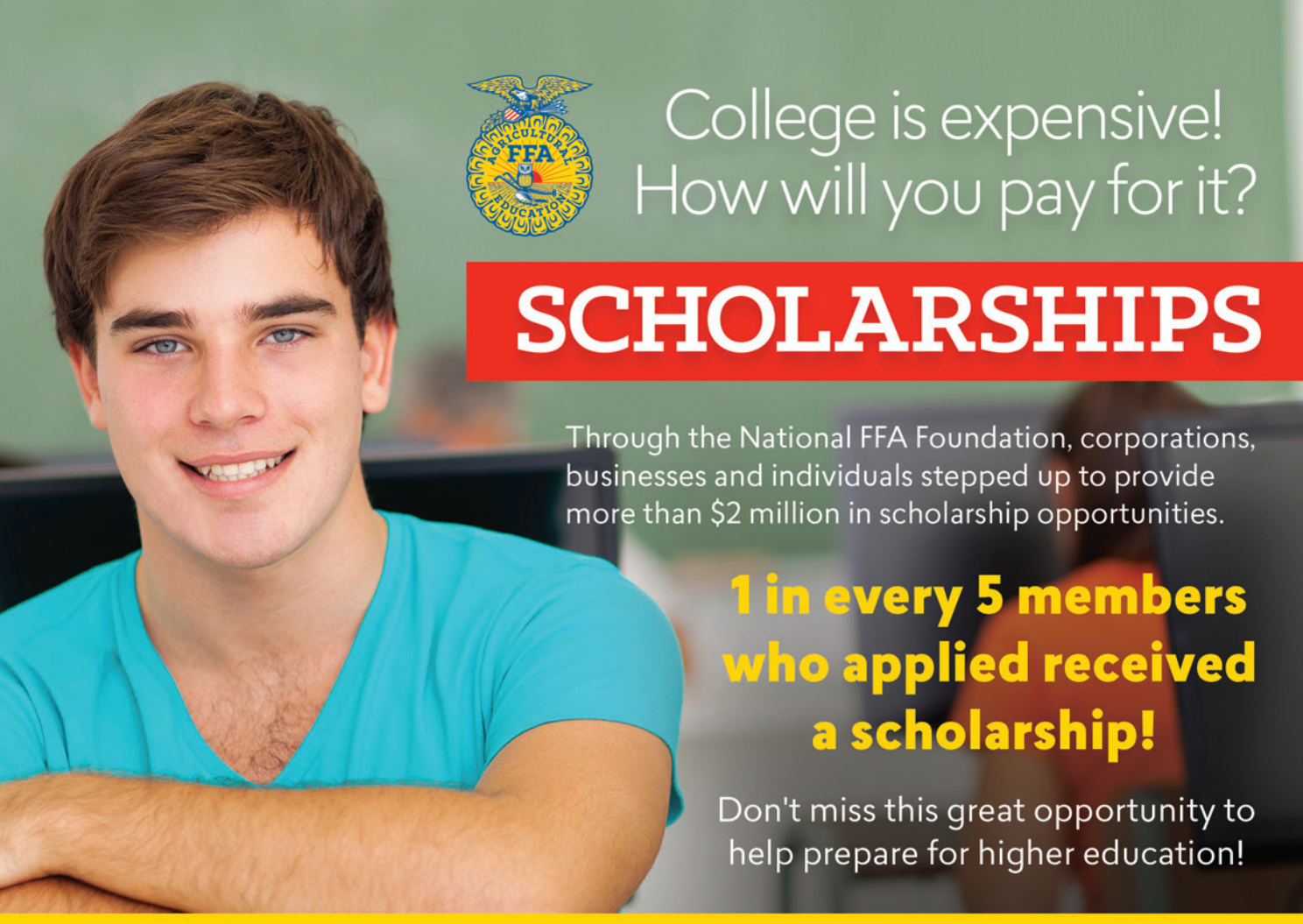

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The magazine of the National FFA Organization

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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.

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Visit *FFA New Horizons* online to read more great content, learn about agriculture and submit your story!

TEST YOURSELF

Test your knowledge of all things FFA. Our quizzes section (FFAnewhorizons.org/quizzes) features fun brain busters like:

- How well do you know today's FFA?
- Are you dressed for success in FFA Official Dress?
- Can you remember your FFA history lessons?

SUBMIT A STORY

We want to post YOUR stories on the website and in the magazine. Submit your personal or chapter achievements (along with a photo) at FFAnewhorizons.org/submit-your-story.

DIGITAL MAGAZINE

Want to see past issues of *FFA New Horizons*?

Flip through previous editions at FFAnewhorizons.org/magazine.

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FFA NEWS FROM ACROSS THE U.S.

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

MANTENO FFA, ILLINOIS

Showing FFA Week Love

With National FFA Week coming up in February, look no further than the Manteno FFA Chapter for some unique ideas. For the 2016 celebration, Manteno FFA members kicked off the week by handing out heart-shaped candies imprinted with "I Love FFA" to all students in the school. They also hosted trivia events, organized a petting zoo for the elementary school, raised money for local charities, and capped off the week with a breakfast feast for the faculty and staff.

MORE ONLINE

Visit ShopFFA.org to purchase your FFA Week supplies.

RODEO FOR A CURE

MCMINN CENTRAL FFA, TENNESSEE

Each summer, the McMinn Central FFA in Tennessee hosts a rodeo called Bucking for a Cure.

The event's purpose is to raise awareness and money for cystic fibrosis research, all working toward a cure.

FFA members sell ads for the rodeo program during the school year. They also organize and run the concession stand, and several talented FFA members enter the rodeo as competitors. A great event for a great cause!

TOLLHOUSE-SIERRA FFA, CALIFORNIA

Standing Outside the Fire

In July 2016, the Tollhouse-Sierra FFA Chapter sprung into action when its local community was battling a fire that blazed for nine days.

The high school organized a base camp for more than 500 fire personnel so they could eat, sleep and plan. The FFA members showed their thanks by making posters and collecting food and water for the fire personnel. They also met with these brave men and women to personally express their gratitude.

EUREKA FFA, CALIFORNIA

Blue-Ribbon Event

Eureka FFA members had a fair to remember this summer. Many members took home top honors from the Redwood Acres Fair for their various projects, including turkeys, meat goats, hogs, sheep, beef and rabbits.

The junior livestock auction was also a great success thanks to the incredible local community members.

BUSHNELL FFA, FLORIDA

Read All About It

FFA member Randon Senn of Bushnell, Fla., has created his own news outlet to keep the public informed about FFA and agriculture.

He has assembled his own staff of volunteers to report on agriculture information and post to a Facebook page for National Ag News **(facebook.com/nationalagnews).** To date, the page has more than 750 followers. Randon has also organized an agriculture photo of the month contest on the page.

DEWEY FFA, OKLAHOMA

Warm Toes, Warm Hearts

Last winter, Dewey FFA Chapter members rose to the occasion to make sure there were fewer cold feet in their community.

Throughout the cold month of December 2015, the chapter collected socks, then donated and distributed them to the elderly at their local nursing home.

The event was a huge success. FFA members collected and delivered more than 200 pairs of socks and spent time visiting with each nursing home resident.

The FFA members who participated said that it was such a fulfilling experience.

YOUR TURN

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

MEET SIX FFA SHINING STARS

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

Railey Oates
CENTRAL FFA, VA

Railey was introduced to FFA by her study hall teacher who also happened to be the agriculture teacher. Railey has competed in the public speaking career development event (CDE), served as chapter president and showed swine.

Kristie Alexander
KILLINGLY FFA, CT

FFA has helped Kristie grow from a shy, reserved student into an accomplished leader. Kristie raises dairy goats and uses the milk to make skin care products. She also rides horses and maintained honor roll all through high school.

Brittney A. Vazquez
S.U. EPIFANIO ESTRADA FFA, PUERTO RICO

Brittney has traveled to the National FFA Convention & Expo three years in a row to compete in all three public speaking CDEs. She has been an FFA member for six years and served as state secretary.

Apolinar Blanco
WASHINGTON FFA, WA

Apolinar Blanco has served as state FFA president and competed in apple judging, livestock judging, prepared public speaking, extemporaneous public speaking, job interview, forestry and FFA Creed CDEs.

Jeremy D. Posluszny
ALLENTOWN FFA, NJ

Since becoming active in the FFA program four years ago, Jeremy has served as an advocate for agriculture. He testified before the New Jersey Assembly to promote agricultural education and serves as state FFA treasurer.

Grant Croat
NORTH POLK FFA, IA

Grant is an active FFA member. He has worked at the Avenue of Breeds at the Iowa State Fair, participated in the annual fruit sales, and raised and showed market hogs at the Polk County Fair.

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.

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ILLUSTRATION BY Kris Sexton

www.FFAnewhorizons.org

IN AGRICULTURE

New AgExplorer website puts a world of agricultural careers at your fingertips

If you thought a career in agriculture was just for farmers and ranchers, think again. Hundreds of diverse careers exist in agriculture, and contrary to popular belief, few involve driving a tractor.

You can discover your future career in agriculture with the help of a new online career portal, AgExplorer.FFA.org. With the click of a button, the website allows you to learn about 235 unique careers in agriculture, watch videos, find jobs that match your interests and even take virtual field trips. Career profiles include a job description, typical responsibilities, job outlook, education requirements, average salary, link to a college/university database and jobs currently available. AgExplorer.FFA.org is a joint project

launched by the National FFA Organization, Discovery Education and AgCareers.com.

"Introducing young people to the wide variety of STEM career paths that power the agriculture industry is so important," says Lori McFarling, senior vice president for Discovery Education. "Discovery Education is proud to partner with the National FFA Organization to introduce AgExplorer, a dynamic digital program that connects academic skills and interests to real-world careers, helping students find their future in agriculture."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates agriculture will have more than 60,000 job openings annually. Highly skilled graduates will be needed to fill many of them.

"So often, students are told if they want to work in agriculture, they need to be a farmer or a rancher. But those of us in the industry know agriculture is so much more," says Haley Hampton, senior educational consultant in the National FFA Organization's Leadership, Education, Assessment & Development Division. "Farmers and ranchers are the backbone of agriculture, but to get the food from the farm to the table, it takes a wide range of businesses and careers. There are careers in agriculture beyond what most people see. Students can have a fulfilling career in agriculture, whether they want to work in business, politics, manufacturing, environmental management, or in the plant, animal and food sciences."

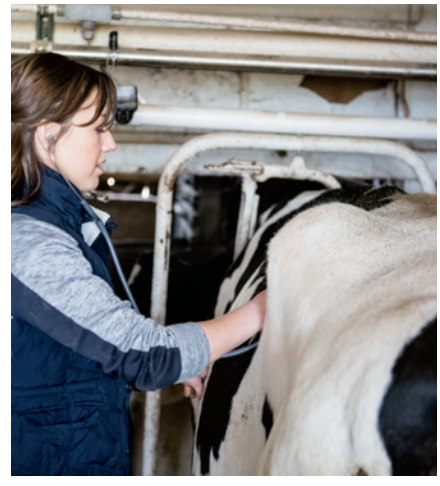
In 2015, AgCareers.com had nearly 78,000 jobs posted on its website in the United States alone – further proof that agricultural careers are plentiful.

"Our team at AgCareers.com hopes the AgExplorer website broadens students' awareness of the wide variety of careers we have available in our industry. Then students can connect to real-time careers on our website for additional exploration," says Ashley Collins, AgCareers.com education and marketing manager. "We need to get awareness of these career opportunities to more young people so they can plan their professional path in agriculture. I hope students are surprised that there are so many careers profiled. This industry is so broad, there is literally something for everyone when you consider all the allied careers that exist."

AgExplorer.FFA.org, a new online portal, introduces FFA members to the many careers in agriculture, including meat science, veterinary medicine and food science research.

Most students don't think careers such as graphic designers, social media strategists, electricians and merchandisers are agricultural careers. But ag businesses need people with all those skills and more to be successful.

"When a person already has an understanding of what agriculture is, it makes it much easier for them to do those jobs for an agricultural business," Hampton explains. "Because there aren't enough students graduating college with degrees related to agricultural businesses have to hire people without agricultural knowledge to fill these careers. It takes extra training to get those individuals



to a level where they can do the job competently."

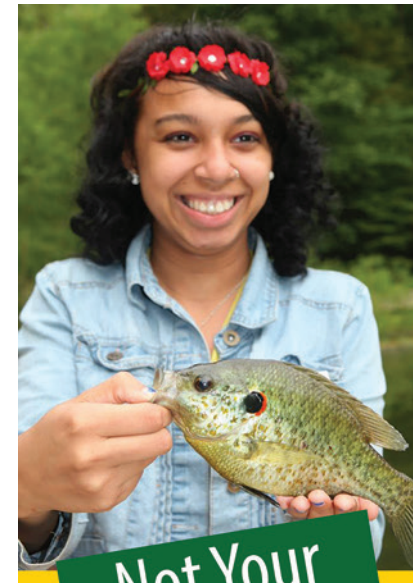
If you have a specific interest, such as horses, law, bees or teaching, you can search AgExplorer.FFA.org to fi nd related careers. If you aren't sure what you'd like to do, you can complete the Career Finder assessment, a short 13-question survey that helps match your interests to careers in agriculture.

"We have already received feedback from users, and it has been overwhelmingly positive," Hampton says. "Before AgExplorer, there wasn't an agricultural career exploration website that had a national focus, so AgExplorer is making it easier for people everywhere to learn about careers in agriculture. We hope students will see they can be involved in agriculture and still have their dream career."

– Jessica Mozo

MORE ONLINE

Ready to find out what career in agriculture is the best fit for you? Visit AgExplorer.FFA.org to get started.



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ADVOCACY FOR AGRICULTURE

Monsanto programs highlight and support rural America

The word "grow" is extremely important to agriculture. It represents, of course, the growing cycles for plants and animals, as well as the ever-increasing importance of agriculture.

To global agricultural company Monsanto, "grow" also references the growth of rural America, the growth and development of future ag leaders, and the growing importance of serving the communities around us.

In recent years, the Monsanto Fund has launched three community outreach programs under its America's Farmers Initiative, the company's community outreach platform. The three programs are called Grow Communities, Grow Rural Education and Grow Ag Leaders – each focusing on strengthening rural America. Since 2010, the three programs have given a combined $36 million to rural communities.

MONSANTO / CURT DENNISON

"Strengthening and supporting farming communities is extremely important to our company," says Brian Leake, advocacy and communications manager for Monsanto. "We've heard loud and clear that there are significant needs in rural areas. This trifecta of programs is meant to address different audiences and community needs."

One common thread among all three of these programs is local farmer involvement. Farmers enroll, nominate or endorse nonprofits, schools, and youth in their communities to receive the grants or donation and can then witness firsthand the impact in their areas.

"That's by design," Leake says. "We want farmers to help us determine the best ways to award these grants and scholarships. Plus, it helps strengthen their role and presence in their own communities."

GROW COMMUNITIES

The first program Monsanto launched was the Grow Communities campaign. Eligible farmers enroll to win a $2,500 donation to direct to their favorite eligible local nonprofit organization. Since 2010, Grow

Communities has awarded more than $22 million to rural communities across the country. Farmers have chosen to donate to local 4-H clubs, FFA chapters, fire departments, charities, schools, community centers, food pantries and more.

"A key component to this initiative is that the farmer directs the donation to the organization that he or she wishes to support," Leake explains. "The farmer is as much a part of this donation as the Monsanto Fund is."

GROW RURAL EDUCATION

The second program launched by the Monsanto Fund focuses on strengthening rural education.

Since 2011, the program has partnered with farmers to support rural public school districts through math and science learning grants.

As with Grow Communities, farmers can nominate their local school districts to compete for merit-based grants of $10,000 or $25,000.

Once nominated, school districts submit a grant application supporting a project that enhances math and/or science education. Panels of teachers and farmer leaders choose the winning school districts.

Winning applications have included projects focused on aquaponics, greenhouses, updating technology, robotics and more.

GROW AG LEADERS

The initiative probably most familiar to FFA members is Grow Ag Leaders, a scholarship fund administered through the National FFA Scholarship Program.

Grow Ag Leaders awards rural youth $1,500 scholarships to support post-high school studies in ag-related fields. In 2016, more than $500,000 in scholarships was awarded.

As part of the application process, students ask farmers to endorse them. Leake says Monsanto finds it important for farmers to endorse students whom they believe will contribute to the future success of the industry.

The Grow Ag Leaders application process is currently open (through Feb. 1), and Leake recommends all eligible high school students apply.

"We want students to think about agriculture as a future path," he says. "There are so many careers in agriculture to consider."

MONSANTO SUPPORTS FFA

Monsanto is a sustainable agricultural company, headquartered in St. Louis, Mo., with facilities in 33 states and 66 countries.

The company's focus is on empowering farmers – large and small – to produce more from their land while conserving more of our world's natural resources such as water and energy.

Monsanto does this with its leading seed brands in crops like corn, cotton, oilseeds, and fruits and vegetables. The company also produces in-the-seed trait technologies for farmers.

With a growing population and a demand to feed 9 billion people by 2050, Monsanto knows that agriculture needs talented, driven and passionate youth willing to make a commitment to the industry. That's why the company has invested in FFA for more than 60 years and is a platinum sponsor of the National FFA Foundation.

Monsanto and the Monsanto Fund support FFA through the America's Farmers campaigns, including scholarships, and sponsorship of leadership conferences, career development events and ag advocacy efforts.

Thank you, Monsanto!

MONSANTO

Asheboro Zoo FFA Chapter members pose for a quick photo before a walk through the zoo and greenhouses to look at plants.

THE SCHOOL AT A ZOO

Asheboro, N.C., high school launches first FFA chapter at a zoo

Most high school students would jump at the chance to spend half their school day at the local zoo. That's certainly the case at Asheboro High School (AHS), in North Carolina, where students are participating in a new agricultural education program at the nearby North Carolina Zoo.

For the past 10 years, AHS has partnered with the North Carolina Zoo to give students unique learning experiences through the AHS Zoo School. Students in 10th, 11th and 12th grades can apply for the zoo school, and those who are accepted travel to a classroom and lab facility at the zoo for classes in science, technology, engineering and math.

Teachers and zoo staff work together to create lessons that allow students to observe animals and sometimes go behind the scenes with zookeepers for a closer look. The zoo school has about 130 students enrolled.

"The zoo school has long been a great asset for STEM learning. Last year, we brought our agricultural program on board," says Elizabeth Pack, agriculture teacher and FFA advisor for the AHS Zoo School program.

In July 2015, AHS launched the Asheboro Zoo FFA Chapter, the only FFA chapter in the National FFA Organization that is headquartered at a zoo.

"We had a chartering ceremony in September 2015, and about 100 people came, including students, parents and school officials," Pack says. "It has surpassed all my expectations. Most of our members are urban kids with not much agriculture exposure. We've had a phenomenal response from students and our community."

The Asheboro Zoo FFA Chapter started with 53 members in the 2015-16 school year. Their goal is to reach 75 members for the 2016-17 school year.

Students in the zoo school agricultural education program spend half their day at AHS and then take buses to the zoo. There, they take classes such as agriscience applications, horticulture, and environmental and natural resources. Students get hands-on, project-based learning experiences in the zoo's greenhouses and other green spaces, including a community garden.

"In agriscience, students learn how agriculture impacts their everyday life. The first horticulture class is about plant care, and the second course teaches skills needed in the greenhouse or landscaping industry," Pack says. "The natural resources class teaches them about things like water and soil quality. They test samples in real-world applications. In our first year, our intro to horticulture team placed fifth at the state level."

The zoo school is basically a satellite campus of AHS, with a giant mobile unit consisting of five classrooms and a lunchroom.

"Any student can apply for zoo school. In the application process, we look at whether they are motivated to learn, since a lot of what we do is hands-on and student-driven," Pack says. "It has been rewarding to build relationships with the zoo staff, which allows students to have amazing experiences. We are introducing agriculture to students who never knew about it before. It's preparing the next generation of people taking care of our environment and managing our food supply."

Junior Edwin Garcia is president of the Asheboro Zoo FFA Chapter.

"In the beginning, I didn't know how much I would like FFA since I live in the city," Garcia says. "But I fell in love with it. The meetings and officer interaction feels like home to me. I have always been interested

PHOTOS/ASHLEY LANDERS

in the environment, recycling and reusable energy, and Mrs. Pack has helped me realize my passion is for the earth, being eco-friendly and helping our planet."

Junior Carlee Cagle enjoys the leadership aspect of FFA. "I was super excited about our new FFA chapter because I had heard good things about FFA," Cagle says. "From our first meeting, it felt like family."

Cagle had dreams of becoming a vet or a pediatrician, but now she is considering becoming an ag teacher.

"I want to make a difference in the lives of students," she says. "One of our area middle schools is starting FFA, and we are planning to do workshops and mentor them."

Students at the Zoo School don't work hands-on with animals due to liability reasons, but they do grow plants for the animals to eat.

"A lot of horticulture happens at a zoo, so we find lots of ways to help," Pack says. "We hope to include classes in small animal care and zoology in the future as our ag program grows. We also hope to work with wildlife rehabilitation."

While most people think of a zoo as a place for exotic animals, it's also a great habitat for native plant varieties, providing a perfect hands-on tool for horticulture classes.

Pack says she is so proud of her students' willingness to serve others.

"We use the zoo and its employees as a resource, so it's important to us to show appreciation and give back," she says. "We have helped them with Earth Day and highway cleanups."

– Jessica Mozo

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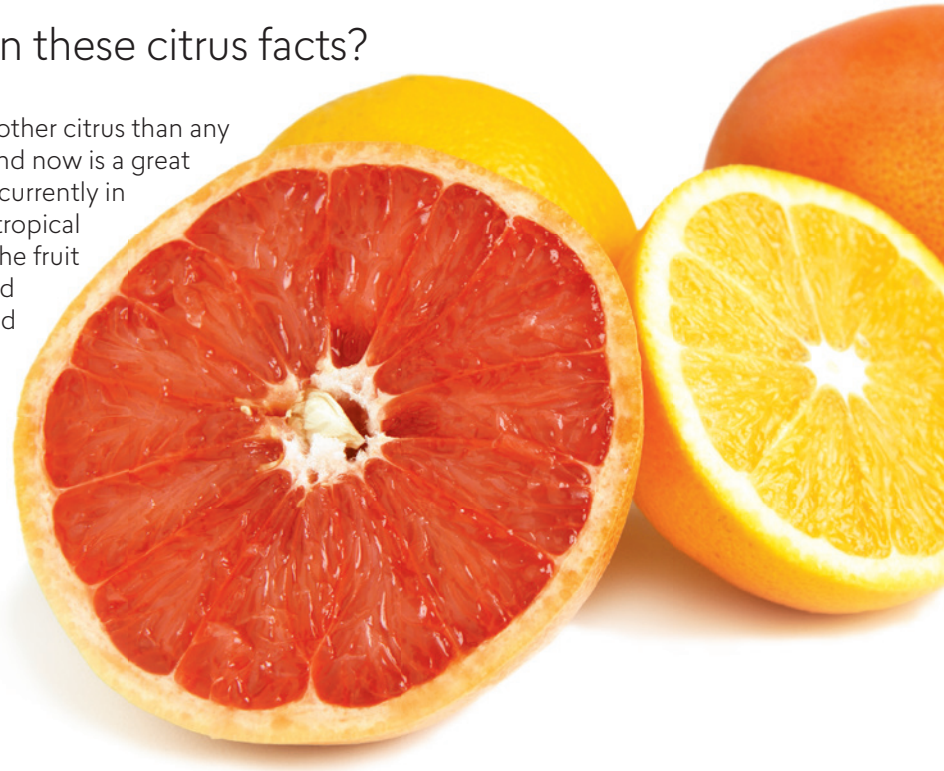
A Juicy Fruit

‘Orange’ you glad to learn these citrus facts?

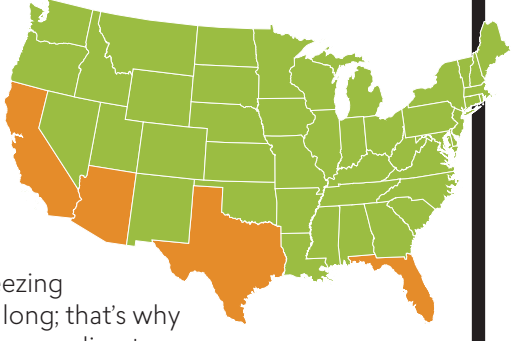
Americans consume more oranges and other citrus than any other fruit, mostly in the form of juice. And now is a great time to enjoy citrus fruits, since they are currently in season. These fruits are grown in sunny, tropical locations, and winter months are when the fruit is the sweetest, most readily available and most affordable. If you have ever received a box or oranges as a holiday gift or found a lone fruit in the toe of your stocking, that’s why!

Florida is the top citrus-producing state, and it’s been grown there commercially since the mid-1800s. The first citrus was brought to the New World in 1493 by Christopher Columbus, and in the mid-1500s, an early Spanish explorer planted the first orange trees in Florida.



Top Citrus States

As one might expect, the top-producing citrus states are sunny and warm. Florida, California, Arizona and Texas grow the vast majority of U.S. citrus production. These plants can’t handle freezing temperatures for very long; that’s why they grow better in warmer climates.



70%

Florida grows more than 70 percent of the citrus consumed in the United States.

Unique Citrus Fruits

WE ALL KNOW ABOUT LEMONS, LIMES AND ORANGES, BUT HAVE YOU HEARD OF THESE EXCITING CITRUS FRUITS?

1 **KUMQUATS:** Not only can you enjoy the kumquat fruit itself, but the peels are edible too!

2 **MINNEOLAS:** This fruit is a cross between a tangerine and a grapefruit. It is nicknamed “the honeybell” because of its bell shape and elongated neck.

3 **POMELOS:** The pomelo is a natural, or non-hybrid, citrus fruit native to Southeast Asia. It is large and pear-shaped.

4 **SATSUMAS:** Satsumas are small and easy to peel. They make great snacks or holiday centerpieces.

5 **UGLIS:** The ugli is a large, yellow, wrinkly skinned fruit originating from Jamaica.

6 **TANGELOS:** Tangelos are a hybrid of a mandarin orange and grapefruit. They have loose, bright red-orange skin that is easy to peel.

GROWING A MOVEMENT

Through Tractor Supply Company's grant program, FFA chapters impact their local communities

The Elkins FFA Chapter in West Virginia used funds from the TSC Grants for Growing program to purchase fencing supplies for a garden.

More than 370 high school agriculture programs and FFA chapters are now better equipped for community outreach, thanks to Tractor Supply Company's Grants for Growing.

The program, launched in two pilot states in 2015 and available to all FFA chapters in 2016, awards grants to be used to boost current or launch new agricultural education projects.

The grant funding is raised through the sale of paper emblems in TSC stores during National FFA Week. In its first year, that campaign raised more than $700,000 to be awarded as grants.

"Agriculture is so important in our communities and to our customers, and agricultural education is critical to the growth and sustainment of the ag industry," explains Lisa White, director of store marketing for Tractor Supply Company. "With budget cuts these days, ag education programs are more and more challenged. We wanted to make a difference there and make grants available that could be used to help build and sustain existing ag education programs."

White says this year's recipients used the funds in a variety of ways, from enhancing their community gardens to purchasing new tools or technology for school farms.

White adds that emphasis was placed on applications that showed how the project would be sustaining, meaning that it wouldn't have just a one-year impact, but will live on to benefit future FFA members.

Elkins High School in West Virginia, for example, used their grant to build a fence around their local community garden to protect future harvests from wildlife.

"Three years ago, we started a garden behind our greenhouse. It was fantastic to see huge zucchini plants grow and tomato plants spilling out of their cages," explains FFA advisor Wendy Thurston. "We donated our first harvest to the local food pantry."

Thurston says that she and her FFA members saw how little fresh

GRANT / FFA NEW HORIZONS

Sullivan FFA members in Indiana prepare to transplant milkweed plants in the chapter's new butterfly habitat.

produce was available through the food bank. This realization fueled their determination to grow more vegetables to donate. But the wildlife soon found their garden.

"The critters liked the new leaves of zucchini and squash plants. Tomatoes and peppers fared no better," Thurston laments. "We felt helpless, looking at our garden, remembering the people standing in line just to get enough food for their families. Our chapter didn't have the funds to build a fence, which we knew we needed."

The Grants for Growing program came just in time. It's made a huge difference, Thurston says, both in the community and in her FFA members.

"Sometimes you have to work hard for others," says Elkins FFA sentinel Logan Rowan, "because they're not able to do it. But I can."

In Indiana, the Sullivan FFA Chapter received a grant to create a habitat for monarch butterflies.

"Similar to birds, monarch butterflies participate in an annual migration," says Kevin Cross, Sullivan FFA advisor. "They travel from their overwintering grounds in Mexico to their summer breeding habitats in the Eastern U.S. and Southern Canada. During their migration both ways, the monarchs lay their eggs on milkweed plants."

Milkweed plants are required for monarch survival, as they are the only plants that monarch caterpillars eat before entering the chrysalis stage and emerging as an adult butterfly.

Using their grant from TSC, the Sullivan FFA chapter purchased nearly 700 nectar and milkweed plants, and started the habitat. They anticipate seeing more butterflies every year, with full plant maturity expected in 2018.

"Once the habitat is fully mature, we hope to get elementary and middle school science classes out there," Cross says. "Our vision is for this to be educational for all students and the community."

He adds that this butterfly project would have never happened without the grant and encourages other chapters to apply in 2017.

The 2017 Grants for Growing application period will open Jan. 15. The paper emblem fundraiser campaign in TSC stores will align with National FFA Week in February. Learn more at **FFA.org/grantsforgrowing**.

TRACTOR SUPPLY COMPANY SUPPORTS FFA

Tractor Supply Company is the largest operator of rural lifestyle retail stores in the United States, with more than 1,500 retail stores in 49 states.

TSC stores are located primarily in towns outlying major metropolitan markets and in rural communities. Stores supply the unique products to support their customers' rural lifestyle, from welders and generators to animal care products, and men and women's workwear.

TSC has been a supporter of FFA since 1985 and is a platinum sponsor of the National FFA Organization.

Beyond the Grants for Growing initiative, TSC sponsors national FFA proficiencies, the horse evaluation career development event, National FFA Week, and the FFA hunger initiative.

TSC also sells an annual National FFA Convention & Expo T-shirt, with all proceeds going to FFA. A limited number of shirts from the 2016 National FFA Convention & Expo are still on sale; call your local TSC store to check availability.

Thank you,
Tractor Supply Company!

TSC TRACTOR SUPPLY CO

PHOTOGRAPHY BY Holly Birch Photography

A FOCUS ON (SOY) QUALITY

Illinois FFA Chapter takes part in national soybean testing program

Soybeans may not be a hot topic of discussion among many high school students, but for one FFA chapter in Illinois, they are creating quite a buzz. Students in the agriculture program at Rantoul High School have been planting soybeans in test plots for more than 20 years, but their soybeans garnered national attention during the 2015-16 school year.

The Rantoul FFA Chapter submitted soybean samples from their test plots to a national program called High Yield PLUS Quality (HY+Q), which is funded by the Soybean Checkoff and sponsored by the Illinois Soybean Association. The program's goal is to make sure U.S. soy is the highest quality, highest value and most competitive in the world marketplace.

"We invite farmers and agribusinesses across the United States to submit soybean samples, and we did not expect to receive student samples. Rantoul High School agriculture teacher Roman Fox sent us samples from his students, and that was a pleasant surprise for us," says John Osthus, HY+Q Program Lead. "We were delighted to have students to work with. The educational aspect of what they did is so important because it's a good opportunity to connect the farm with the city, and that's a huge challenge in agriculture these days."

The students' soybean samples were compared with other samples submitted from farms in their area and tested for protein (amino acids) and oil content. Then the HY+Q Program sent the students back a report and even visited Rantoul High School in April 2016 to give a presentation and connect with students on a deeper level.

"We wanted to build awareness with students about how soybean yield and quality helps local economies and connects them to the world," Osthus says. "A lot of people drive by soybean fields and to them, they're just fields. They don't realize those soybeans are feeding people across the world or that there has been a huge increase in soybean demand globally."

Soybeans contain both protein and oil. Soybean oil is used in many food products including margarine, salad dressings and cooking oils. It is also used in industrial products such as plastics and biodiesel fuel. Thanks to the protein and energy in soybean meal, it packs a powerful nutritional punch in animal feeds. Soybeans are also used in lots of edible products. Soy foods popular in Southeast Asia,

A Rantoul FFA member check the plants in the chapter's soybean plot.

Rantoul FFA advisor Roman Fox (left) shows the students how to collect soybean plant samples.

for example, include miso, bean curd, tempeh, soymilk and soy sauce.

"Through this project, our students have learned more about the importance of soybean content," says Fox, who is also the FFA advisor at Rantoul High School. "They learned from researchers and marketers from around the world the importance of oil and protein content. Any time we can work with industry researchers, our students can gain valuable exposure and experience in the science and research sector."

The soybean project was especially eye-opening to students who live in the city as opposed to on farms.

"Our corn and soybean plots are very important to the agriculture experience for our students. Most of them are not from a traditional farm family," Fox says. "Their exposure and opportunities in production agriculture are limited. The plot allows our students to learn agronomic principles in a hands-on, real-world setting."

Osthus agrees.

"Sometimes we get questions from students like whether soybean milk comes from cows," he says. "How food is produced is interesting people more and more. Students at Rantoul High School seemed very interested and had a number of questions for us. We showed them slides describing the soy market in Southeast Asia to describe why U.S. soybeans matter globally."

The chapter's involvement in the national HY+Q Program inspired organizers to encourage more schools to submit soybean samples beginning in the fall of 2017.

"We're very excited to serve FFA and partner with agriculture students," Osthus says. "We want to reach out and invite even more FFA chapters to participate in the program. If they have soybean plots they can grow them, or they can gather samples from local farm families."

– Jessica Mozo

FFA NEW HORIZONS

MORE ONLINE

Is your FFA chapter interested in helping researchers better understand U.S. soybean composition? Email John Osthus at osthusj@ilsoy.org. To learn more about the soybean research happening, visit www.hyqtoday.com.

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TAYLOR: Lead with your heart, and it will find a purpose and inspire others.

NICK: You are the only YOU that ever has been or ever will be.

SYDNEY: You can overcome any storm or struggle when you choose to see hope and be hope.

ABRAH: Listening is more than hearing.

SARAH: To be able to say with full confidence and joy that I did all that for this, it comes down to knowing what's important to you and looking for the good.

ABBEY: Anyone can find joy in the journey.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU, NOW THAT YOUR YEAR AS A NATIONAL FFA OFFICER IS COMPLETE?

TAYLOR: I'll head back to Southern Arkansas University in the spring to finish my degree in agricultural business and minor in Spanish. I hope to study abroad or have an international internship next summer. I can't wait to get plugged back into campus life.

NICK: I'm going back to the best school in the country – the University of Tennessee. I plan on getting more involved in my Alpha Gamma Rho chapter as well as student government. I'd also like to learn some Ray Charles songs on the piano.

SYDNEY: I'll head back to college, get involved on campus and start finding some internships. I also plan on catching up on a lot of Netflix series. Send any suggestions my way!

ABRAH: I'm planning to head back to the good ole' corn country and return to Iowa State University. I am excited to get plugged in with my campus ministry again, find a job and start training for a marathon.

SARAH: I will be serving an 18-month mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, starting in January.

ABBEY: I plan on being a University of Georgia bulldog. My hope is to become more involved with campus ministries as well as agriculture clubs like UGA Cattlemen's Association. Also, I plan on doing a road trip at some point so let me know about some great locations to visit while on my journey.

WHAT ARE TWO THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED ABOUT YOURSELF THIS YEAR?

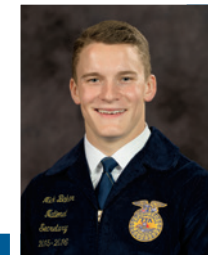
TAYLOR: With enough coffee, I can function on four hours of sleep per night for a solid two weeks.

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.

I also learned that whether I'm in a school, airport or foreign country, with one person or 1,000, a positive attitude and smile go a long way.

NICK: I've learned that you're not allowed to pet the security dogs in the airport. I'm told they're "not that kind of dog." I've also learned that success comes with confidence, and confidence comes with preparation.

SYDNEY: I have a tendency to injure other people. On multiple occasions this year, I accidentally hit someone in the head with something – like a pen, shoe, my hand, etc. Sorry! I also learned that even when I'm tired and have work to do, I will always find time to talk to those I care about. Late-night calls home became a normal thing this year.

ABRAH: I have a mad obsession with all things coffee (and apparently drinking black coffee is a rarity). Also, I used to think I thrived most in large group environments, but I realized this year that I really value one-on-one time with people.

SARAH: I've learned that I'm not necessarily up-to-date with cultural slang, and that one can never have too many Captain America socks. On the real though, I've learned that confidence is best paired with humility.

ABBEY: Domino's "make your own" Hawaiian-style pizza is the bee's knees! I've also learned a tremendous amount about how to interact with others in order to not only have fun, but also work hard.

HOW ARE YOU PLANNING TO STAY INVOLVED WITH FFA NOW THAT YOU HAVE ALUMNI STATUS?

TAYLOR: I look forward to getting plugged in at the state level with our alumni association. I will also look for ways to help members in my home chapter with FFA Creed Speaking or showing livestock, for example.

NICK: I really want to do chapter officer leadership trainings, leadership conferences, etc. I loved that part of this year. Getting to see students grow over the course of a few days is incredibly fulfilling for me.

SYDNEY: I'll definitely keep cheering on FFA members wherever I go! I've thought about maybe facilitating for FFA and helping at the national convention and expo next year, too.

ABRAH: I'm hoping to be a part of state FFA officer programs (Blast Off, NLCSO, etc.), help out with conferences and the Iowa FFA Convention, and be an active part of the Iowa FFA Alumni Association.

SARAH: Eventually I'll be an ag teacher! But until then, I hope to help with the training of state officers in my home state and maybe work backstage at the national convention and expo.

ABBEY: As an active alumni member, I hope to stay involved with the Athens Christian FFA Chapter as well as assist at the Georgia FFA Convention. No one can keep me away from FFA too long, so I'll be helping out wherever the need is.

WE WISH THEM WELL!

In October, the 2015-16 National FFA Officers presided over the National FFA Convention & Expo – leading the general sessions, giving their retiring addresses and attending other convention events.

Visit **FFA.org/convention** to watch videos of their speeches and see other convention results.

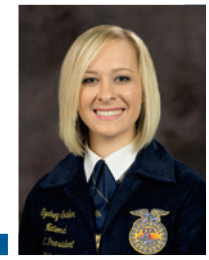
Taylor, Nick, Abbey, Abrah, Sydney and Sarah, thank you for serving us well this past year. We wish you the best!

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.

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Global Impact

Agriculture teachers Haley and Nick Clement take their knowledge to Ghana

FFA members across the nation can attest to the fact that one of agriculture's greatest attributes is that its lessons are universal. Across the globe, the values behind agriculture can be taught and learned in the same way.

Haley and Nick Clement experienced this firsthand when they traveled to Ghana with AgriCorps, a program that connects agriculture educators to developing countries where the need is great.

The couple, both of whom taught agriculture in California, decided to take the opportunity after a mutual friend who worked for AgriCorps encouraged them to apply for the 2015-16 team.

Haley Clement recognizes participants in the agriculture creed competition.

"Our friend's email rekindled a desire to volunteer and work overseas," Haley says. "There were a thousand questions and discussions, late-night Google searches, pro/con lists, and prayers for guidance, but needless to say, we decided to take the plunge and go for it."

After being accepted, the couple had a quick six months to prepare before leaving for Ghana.

Haley says her time in FFA greatly influenced the decision, but perhaps in a distant way.

"As for many agriculture teachers, FFA was a life-changing experience for me. I had amazing teachers, enjoyed public speaking, CDEs and holding office. FFA gave me confidence, leadership skills and a love for agriculture," she says. Her time in FFA influenced her decision to become an agriculture teacher, which in turn led her to AgriCorps.

"The AgriCorps philosophy has many similar parallels to the American agricultural education model. AgriCorps believes that development cannot occur by simply giving people resources – tractors, seeds, etc. – but that it can only occur when people actively seek to improve their own lives," Haley says.

Much of what Haley and Nick taught students in West Africa coincided with elements of FFA. Students gained skills that they could use as a source of income and use through enterprise projects, just like SAEs. They were able to show their parents, who were often farmers themselves, how to make a viable living.

"Agricultural education in all countries is important, but can be

GHANA CREED / HALEY CLEMENT

especially impactful in developing countries like Ghana and Liberia," Haley says. "Here, natural resources are abundant, growing seasons are year-round and jobs in other sectors of the economy are scarce."

> "As for many agriculture teachers, FFA was a life-changing experience for me."
> – *Haley Clement*

One of Haley's coolest accomplishments while in Ghana was the creation of the agriculture creed public speaking contest. She was teaching an entrepreneurship in agriculture class at the Kumasi Institute of Tropical Agriculture and noticed how much the students loved speaking, debating and competition. She came up with the idea to have a school-wide speaking competition and thought of no better way than to use the FFA Creed.

"As soon as the idea came to me, I quickly got to planning," Haley says. She altered the creed to fit the competitors, advertised the competition and recruited students.

"The experience was incredible," she says. "From the outside, it may have looked like a casual competition in a dilapidated classroom, but to me it was nine individuals who would be the change agents for Ghana."

– *Rachel Bertone*

A Kumasi Institute of Tropical Agriculture student recites the agriculture creed.

You're Invited to a Packing Party

Meals of Hope provides nutritious meals to food-insecure families

Some children go to bed with a rumbling stomach. Some parents don't know how to pay for their children's next meal. In times like these, organizations like Meals of Hope provide comfort and nutrition to the members of our community who need it the most.

The organization was founded in 2007 by Stephen Popper, following an experience where a family friend asked him for help shipping food to a school in Haiti. This experience made Popper realize that there was a similar need closer to home, and he should do something about it.

He began assembling healthy meals for families in his own community of Southwest Florida. He held the first Food Packing Event, and with the help of a local high school, packed 135,000 meals.

Inspired by the success his packing parties had in Southwest Florida, Popper expanded to other communities all over the country in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Ohio, Illinois and Michigan.

So far, Meals of Hope has touched the lives of countless families and packaged and distributed more than 30 million meals. These meals are packed by volunteers and sponsors and distributed for free by the Feeding America Food Bank Network to families experiencing food insecurity.

To these families, 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.

"People want to give back, but they often don't know where to go or whether their action will make a difference," Popper says.

FFA HOSTS PACKING EVENTS

Several state FFA associations and individual chapters have been inspired to host their own packing parties at their state conventions.

Ohio FFA members and ag industry leaders teamed up during the 88th Ohio FFA Convention to package 88,000 meals for families in need.

An individual chapter in Ohio also planned its own packing party. Crestview FFA gathered its 60 members and then recruited the rest of the student body to package 50,000 macaroni and cheese meals. The FFA members also raised $12,000 to pay for the meals.

Chapter members say the project was especially important to them after learning that 10 percent of students in their school district are food insecure.

HOW TO HELP

Your chapter can host its own packing party to help fight hunger in your community. All you need is a gymnasium, warehouse, or cafeteria and willing volunteers. For less than 25 cents per meal, your chapter can help alleviate food insecurity while building leadership skills, improving community involvement and raising awareness for an important cause.

All meals packed by your FFA chapter will be provided to recipients free of charge through well-established food banks throughout the country. You can also choose to send food to other communities, or even other countries.

Visit **MealsofHope.org** for more information.

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F. Total distribution (sum of 15C and 15E)	621,726	604,282
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17. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

Julie Woodard, National FFA Organization

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Local Leverage

National FFA Local Engagement Programs offer financial support

FFA members and chapters across the nation are accomplishing great feats, and more times than not, the community takes notice, offering overwhelming support. Through National FFA Local Engagement Programs, chapters, local businesses and national companies can each leverage that support so everyone benefits.

The FFA vision is to grow leaders, build communities and strengthen agriculture. Local engagement programs allow members to step up and be project leaders that engage communities and, in many cases, educate communities on agriculture.

"The goal is to connect local chapters to local businesses and to national companies that support FFA," says Jackie Edwards Jr., development coordinator for local engagement programs. "This allows chapters to secure financial support as well as other equipment, training, mentoring and help with SAEs. In return, it offers an opportunity for the national companies to connect with FFA members through dealerships, retailers and restaurants locally, to build a positive community image and gives them a direct pipeline of local talent for future employment."

There are several types of programs, including blue jacket programs, chapter grants and scholarships. Blue jacket programs grant the iconic Official Dress piece to members who may not otherwise be able to afford it. In 2016, both Culver's franchises and Mahindra USA Tractors participated in blue jacket programs. Syngenta has been a longtime blue jacket supporter.

Chapter grants can be secured through retail incentives, rebate programs or dealer chapter selection. These grants help local chapters with existing or new projects, help members attend educational and leadership events, and provide resources for members participating in competitions, SAEs and CDEs, and may help cover the cost of attending state convention and the national convention and expo.

Edwards advises that chapters should take advantage of these programs to help secure funds to begin or complete projects. These funds will allow chapters to add to their fundraising or possibly do less fundraising, which allows for more project time. Currently, Arctic Cat, AGCO Corporation and Syngenta offer chapter grants through dealer selection. Wix Filters and Zoetis offer retail and rebate-based programs, and Tractor Supply Company has a competitive grant program.

National FFA Local Engagement Programs help make new opportunities possible for FFA members across the country.

Businesses also have the ability to offer scholarships to members through local engagement programs.

"Scholarships are supported by the greatest number of sponsors," Edwards says.

Scholarships and the competitive grant programs require members or chapters to submit an application, so the chances of obtaining either are the same.

"Like the dealer-selected chapter grants, the only advantage scholarships offer is that a dealer will name a specific chapter so that only members of that chapter are eligible for the sponsored scholarship," Edwards adds.

Currently, companies including AGCO Corporation, Chevy Trucks, Ford Trucks, John Deere, Monsanto and Ram Trucks offer scholarships. And though each type of program offers different opportunities for chapters, all are equally beneficial in connecting FFA with the local community. "The programs create lasting relationships that offer great educational benefits and possible future employment," Edwards says.

For each type of local engagement program, chapters are asked to report on the project's progress, how the funds are being spent, and how a sponsor's gift has impacted their chapter and communities. These stories, when combined with other chapters' reports, show tremendous impact is being made across the U.S.

Learn more at **FFA.org/localengagement**.

THOMAS SHIRLEY, JR.

Past state FFA officer waits 73 years to preside over the Virginia FFA State Convention

THE BIO

Hometown: Luray, Va.

Advisor: R.A. "Bob" Wall

FFA SAE: Diversified agriculture

Career: Banking

Family: Wife, Doris, and one son, Thomas R. Shirley III

A proud moment for state FFA officers is the opportunity to preside over a state convention. When Mr. Thomas R. Shirley, Jr., served as Virginia FFA State President in 1943-44, he never received that chance, due to World War II.

This summer, 92-year-old Shirley finally got his chance to preside over the FFA members, advisors and guests in attendance at the 90th Virginia FFA State Convention.

Shirley, born prior to the founding of the Future Farmers of Virginia and Future Farmers of America, was raised on a diversified farm near Luray with his two younger brothers. He became a member of the Luray FFA Chapter in the early 1940s under advisor R.A. "Bob" Wall.

In 1943, World War II was in full swing, and an abbreviated state FFA convention was held that year. Shirley was elected to the office of Virginia FFA State President. Throughout the remainder of 1943, Shirley visited chapters in Virginia and the National FFA Convention in Kansas City.

With the pending invasion of mainland Europe, State FFA President Shirley was drafted into the U.S. Army in early 1944 where he served as an infantryman in the 1st Infantry Division. Shirley's service to his county ended his opportunity to preside over the 1944 Virginia FFA State Convention, which was held again that year as an abbreviated event due to wartime restrictions.

Upon returning to the farm after his military service, Shirley says he saw many changes in farming practices, the biggest being the shift from horsepower to tractor power. After marrying, he chose to leave farming and entered a career in banking, where he stayed until his retirement.

As Shirley addressed the crowd at the 90th Virginia FFA State Convention this June, he shared warm recollections of his days as an FFA member and soldier, and how the leadership skills he acquired as a FFA member carried him well throughout his adult life and banking career in his hometown of Luray.

He concluded his remarks with, "May this organization continue to be the greatest organization. God bless you all."

– Article and arrangements for Mr. Shirley's visit were provided by Dr. Philip Fravel, Clemson University Agricultural Education Program. A special thanks to Dr. Randol Waters, Agricultural Education Professor Emeritus from the University of Tennessee for providing transportation and companionship for Mr. Shirley throughout his visit to Blacksburg, Dr. John Hillison, and to all Virginia FFA members and teachers for making Mr. Shirley's historic visit a special occasion.

FFA NEW HORIZONS

MORE ONLINE

See more photos and watch a video of Shirley's convention speech at FFAnewhorizons.org.

BY WORKING TOGETHER ON A COMMON MISSION, WE CAN

GROW LEADERS

BUILD COMMUNITIES

STRENGTHEN AGRICULTURE

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California FFA NEWS

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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"

FFA FOUNDATION *update*

WHERE WILL YOUR FFA JACKET TAKE YOU?

Thank you for participating in the California FFA Foundation's first-ever #GivingTuesday campaign! Thanks to the support of our members, teachers, parents, alumni, and industry allies, we have the opportunity to provide our members with their very own jacket. They will have the opportunity to share in the same experiences, that unify our members in a long-standing tradition and reminds them that they are part of something larger than themselves. With generous gifts received, the California FFA Foundation is able to gift jackets to members who would not otherwise be able to own their own jacket.

For information on applying or nominating someone for an official FFA Jacket, visit
www.CalAgEd.org/GivingTuesday

UPCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER • Happy Holidays **JANUARY** • **4·5** MFE/ALA - Sacramento **13·14** MFE/ALA - Redding **20·21·22·23** MFE/ALA - Monterey **27·28** MFE/ALA - Ontario **FEBRUARY** • **3·4** MFE/ALA - Modesto **14·15·16** World Ag Expo - Tulare **17·18·19·20** MFE/ALA - Visalia **19-25** National FFA Week **22** FFA Foundation Blue & Gold Gala **23** FFA Foundation BBQ

For a list of current FFA events please visit
www.CalAgEd.org

STATE OFFICERS ON THE go

State Officers have a poetic beginning to their year of service!

State Officers kicked off their term with meet & greets, industry tours, and budding friendships. Read below for each officers' Haiku Poem expressing their experience so far. Post your own FFA inspired Haiku for a change to be published in the Spring edition of CA FFA News.

Busting some moves at the Regional Officer Leadership Conference 80's themed dance

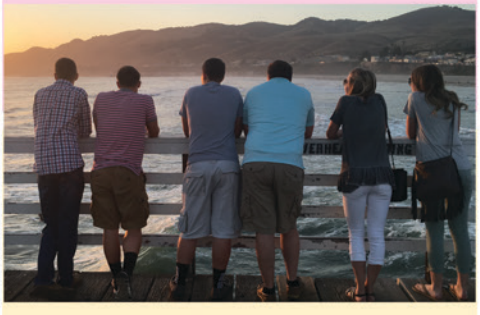
AMANDA

All of them unique
Each member's story complete
Launching FFA

above: Making a special appearance on Eyewitness News in Fresno. Joey Horta (on the left) was a former Atwater FFA member.

LAUREN

Family of six
Lots of blessings and laughter
Launching FFA



Checking out a beautiful sunset on the Pismo Beach Pier after a full day at the CATA Conference!

CONNER

FFA Leaders
Lead those who want to be led
Launching FFA

above: Playing Capture the FFA Jacket with Central Region at their SOLS.
right: Touring Fresno State. Go Dogs!

ANDREW

Members everywhere
Fun & cool with ag in school
Launching FFA

Hiking Bryce Canyon, Utah at NLCSO (National Leadership Conference for State Officers)

SAM

Try not to be late
Venturing around the state
Launching FFA

Early mornings are fun when you get to feed calves and watch a beautiful sunrise. (Farm tours in Tulare)

JACE

Ag, everything ag
Friends, fun & future farmers
Launching FFA

Post your Haiku using hashtag

#FFANEWS

FEATURED CHAPTER

Mountain Empire FFA

Mountain Empire FFA is in the rural Mountain Empire Unified School District, located in eastern San Diego County. The district spreads across 660 square miles and covers nine different communities between the towns of Descanso, Jacumba, and Potrero. The bucolic countryside has cattle, poultry, swine, horse ranches, vineyards, and oat hay fields. The Mountain Empire High school was founded in 1916. Our FFA chapter was established in 1996 and Kelly Tulloch, founder of the Mountain Empire FFA, has been the advisor ever since. Over 30% of the approximately 360 students in the high school are enrolled in ag biology, ag chemistry, ag mechanics, and/or floral design classes. All ag students participate annually in the Eastern San Diego County Junior Fair and San Diego County Fair.

Since the chapter's establishment, it has become a large part of the small community and we volunteer for many activities throughout the year. Some of the major activities include a canned food drive for Thanksgiving, North Pole Ltd. Christmas Train at the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum, and Adopt-a-Family program to give gifts to families in need during the holidays.

One of our biggest activities that we do is the North Pole Ltd. Christmas Train, something special to our area. Every year our agriculture program teams up with other clubs from Mountain Empire High to volunteer as elves on the train. One night in December, we ride along on the vintage train, passing out cookies and hot chocolate to the passengers, reading stories, singing Christmas carols, and bringing the North Pole to life for young children. Another way we encourage students to participate in community service is through a canned food drive. If they bring in a certain number of canned items they may join in the turkey bowling competition. A bowling alley is set up in the school's hallway with pins on one end. The students then roll a frozen turkey (note: turkeys are not round) to knock down the pins.

The chapter is also involved in many competitions including Opening/Closing, Parliamentary Procedure, CDE teams including horse & livestock judging, farm records, creed, impromptu, prepared, and extemporaneous speaking contest, and job interview. Our officer team consists of the six standard officer positions with a Historian, two delegates, and this year our Vice President was elected San Diego Section Sentinel.

Our chapter was a part of the reenactment of a historic photo taken along the beach of La Jolla in 1906. At the time, there was a dairy in La Jolla run by the family of Jeremiah Lee Holliday. During the afternoon, the Holstein cows belonging to the Long Beach Dairy would wander onto the beach to relax for the day. The photograph has become an important part of San Diego history. Last year, the Mountain Empire FFA donated time and two out of the eleven Holstein heifers to reenact the new 'Cows at the Beach' photo shoot.

For FFA week, we nominate up to four members of our high school staff to 'Kiss the Cow' on Friday. Members of the committee take the decorated coffee cans for each staff member around the school. Students vote for their favorite by placing money into the cans

{ Continued on page 5 }

{ Continued from page 4 }

belonging to the teacher they want to kiss the cow. At the end of the week, the teacher who has the most money in the can kisses the cow at lunch with the entire student body watching!

The chapter offers a college tour each fall for seniors. We travel with another local FFA program and visit up to six agriculture colleges and universities over a span of three days. Our students gain valuable insight and information about each school so they can determine where to apply for their future education.

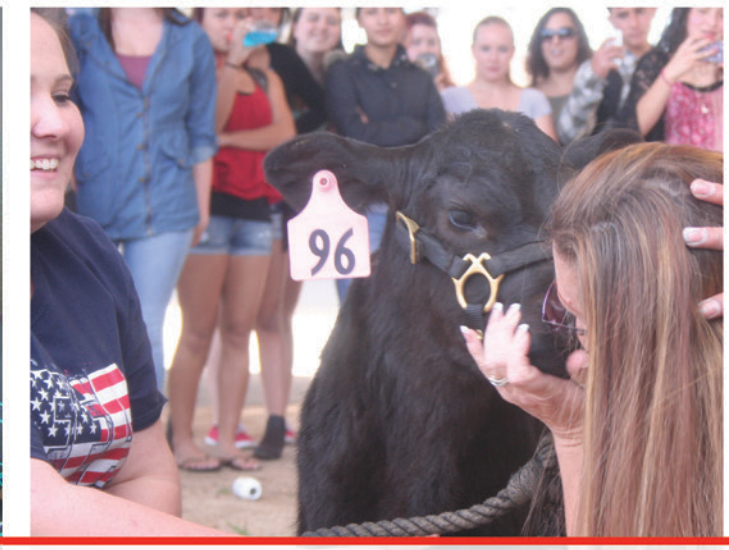
Mountain Empire FFA is very proud to have a member representing our chapter at the National FFA Convention as a proficiency finalist. This is the second time our chapter has ever had a national proficiency finalist.

Most FFA chapters have a large group of students that can make a huge difference wherever they go. Mountain Empire FFA may be small in size, but we make up a huge part of our community. If you ever find yourself on I-8 between El Centro and San Diego, take a look around. You will see the desert, the ocean, and in the quiet, seemingly empty mountains, you just might see the Mountain Empire High School, home of the Redhawks and Mountain Empire FFA.

Photo captions

Clockwise, starting on opposite page at top:

- *Members on our college tour at Fresno State. We started the tradition of weighing all the prospective college student group when there for the school farm tour.*
- *The canned food drive generates lots of items for our annual community service project where members "bowl" with a frozen turkey.*
- *Amanda Morrison was the state winner for her proficiency area. She has now been named a national finalist and will compete at the 2016 National FFA Convention. We are proud of her!*
- *FFA members (elves) read the "Polar Express" to the guests on the North Pole Limited train along with a visit from Santa after arriving at the North Pole.*
- *The officer team creates an array of activities for Greenhand Encounter. In one activity, they all painted their hands green, placed their handprint, and signed their names on a giant poster that now hangs in the ag room.*
- *During FFA week, the history teacher had the most "votes" to earn the honor of kissing the cow at lunch.*
- *State conference attendees, showing off their conference t-shirts, are excited and pumped up to attend the opening session in Fresno.*
- *The La Jolla Shores Beach was the setting for the "Cows on the Beach" 110 year anniversary photo shoot where we took Holstein heifers. It generated a lot of curiosity from the beach goers that morning.•*



Why YOU Should Teach Ag!

1 Over 10% of California Ag Teachers will Retire in the next 10 years

In the last **10** years California hired **317** Ag Teachers and added **43** new Ag Programs.

There are **804** California Ag Teachers, **82** of which have been teaching **26-30+** years.

Who will replace them when they retire?

2 The Starting Salary

How is the salary schedule of an Ag Teacher different?

It is important to note that agriculture teachers are typically on 10 month contracts for the school year, therefore earning possible additional stipends for summer month responsibilities. Agriculture teachers are fortunate to enjoy the flexibility of 10 month contracts, coupled with school holidays, in addition to earned vacation time.

Average Base Salary
$63,470

+

Average Extended Contract
$9,377

+

Average FFA Stipend
$2,765

+

Average Department Head Stipend
$1,826

↓

Total Average Salary
$72,635

California Agriculture Teachers earn an additional $15,000 in fringe benefits (medical, dental, retirment, etc.) increasing the average total salary to $87,635.

2015 Total Average Starting Salaries

What can you expect to earn in your first five years teaching agriculture?

The following are averages for first through fifth year California agriculture teachers in 2015. Salaries listed below include FFA stipends, department head stipends and extended contracts. These teachers also earned an additional average of $15,000 in fringe benefits not shown.

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5
$53,393	$55,541	$59,915	$63,204	$62,987

2015 Highest Starting Salaries

What did the highest salaries look like for beginning teachers last year?

The following are the largest paychecks earned for first through fifth year California agriculture teachers in 2015. Salaries listed below include FFA stipends, department head stipends and extended contracts. These teachers also earned an additional average of $15,000 in fringe benefits not reflected in the totals below.

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5
$98,774	$105,530	$88,344	$98,000	$89,668

{ Continued on page 7 }

{ Continued from page 6 }

Believe it or not...

The highest ag teacher salary in 2015 was **$145,280** (21 years).

Did you know...

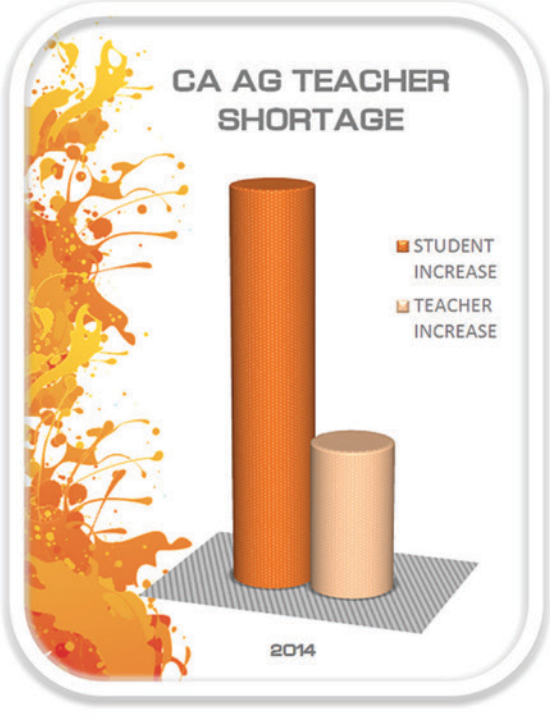
41% of ag teachers made over **$70,000** in 2015?

Come to find out...

The average number of years teaching agriculture in CA is **11.**

Now that's dedication!

The teacher with the longest tenure employed in 2015: **44** years!



3 Agriculture Teacher Shortage

The 15% increase in agriculture educators in 2014 wasn't nearly enough to meet the 40% increase in student enrollment.**

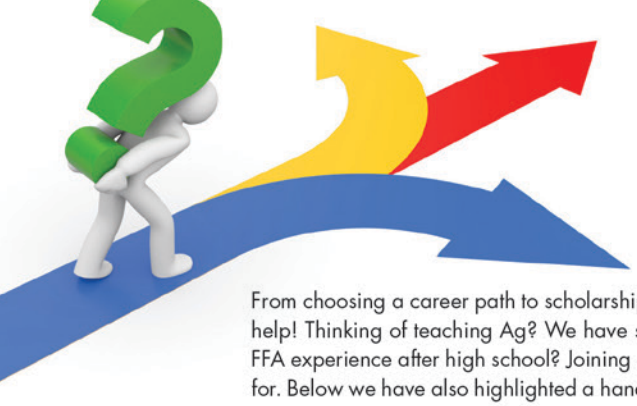
In 2015, there were a total of 175 placements in California alone, including six new programs and 47 additional teachers.**

**Based on 2014 National Supply & Demand*
***Summary of California Agricultural Teaching Opportunities & Placement from 2002-Present Report. Agricultural & Home Economics Education Unit, California Department of Education. September 2, 2015.*

Content provided by:

teachag CALIFORNIA

To learn more about teaching ag visit:
www.TeachAg.org



GRADUATING?!

Now What?

From choosing a career path to scholarship applications life after high school can be overwhelming. CA FFA News is here to help! Thinking of teaching Ag? We have summarized the Ag Ed Credential programs in California. Looking to continue the FFA experience after high school? Joining an Alumni Association or Collegiate FFA chapter may be just what you are looking for. Below we have also highlighted a handful of ag scholarship resources as well as a couple one-stop-shop scholarship sites.

TEACH AGRICULTURE

Ag Teaching Credential

Join a family of over 800 Ag teachers across the State of California. Demand for Ag teachers remains high year after year and will only continue to grow as retirees leave the profession. The Colleges below offer Ag Teaching Credential programs.

Be sure to take a peak at page six to learn more about the perks of being an Ag Teacher.

CAL POLY POMONA

www.csupomona.edu/agsci

CAL POLY
SAN LUIS OBISPO

www.aged.calpoly.edu

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY Chico

www.csuchico.edu/ag

UCDAVIS
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

www.education.ucdavis.edu/agricultural-education

FRESNO STATE
Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.

www.fresnostate.edu/jcast/asae/

"AG FRIENDLY" SCHOLARSHIPS

National FFA

In 2016, the National FFA Organization awarded $2.2 million in scholarships designed to fit the diversity of our applicants. Scholarships are sponsored by businesses and individuals through the National FFA Foundation and are given for a wide variety of experiences, career goals and higher education plans.

The selection process takes into account the whole student - FFA involvement, work experience, Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE), community service, leadership skills, and academics.

More than 1,800 scholarships are available.

www.ffa.org/participate/scholarships

Friends of the CA State Fair

The Friends of the California State Fair Scholarship Program is a collaborative effort between the Friends of the California State Fair, the California Exposition and State Fair, the California State Fair Agricultural Advisory Council, the Ironstone Concours D'Elegance Foundation, Blue Diamond Growers, and Western Fairs Association. This program seeks to motivate well-rounded, high academic achievers. Multiple scholarships are awarded for 14 categories ranging from $1,000 – $2,500 each.

www.castatefair.org/friends-of-the-california-state-fair-scholarship-program

California Farm Bureau

The California Farm Bureau Scholarship Foundation was organized to give aid to students with a desire to pursue a career in the agricultural industry. The scholarships are awarded annually based upon academic achievement, career goals, extracurricular activities, determination, leadership skills, and a commitment to study agriculture.

www.cfbf.com/scholarship-foundation

CONTINUING THE FFA EXPERIENCE | ALUMNI & COLLEGIATE FFA

Scholarship Search Engines

www.scholarshipowl.com

www.scholarships.com

Collegiate FFA

Collegiate FFA members have made a difference on their campuses and in communities, since 1931, through leadership and service.

Collegiate FFA Vision Statement
Collegiate FFA empowers values-driven pre-professionals to lead and serve in schools, businesses and communities.

Collegiate 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.

Collegiate FFA Purpose Statement
Collegiate FFA enhances the collegiate experience through service and engagement to create premier leaders, enable personal growth and ensure career success.

www.ffa.org/participate/collegiate

FFA Alumni Association

FFA relies on alumni members for help with recruiting students and raising funds for chapter activities and scholarships. FFA Alumni also assist at FFA camps and conferences, the National FFA Convention & Expo and other personal development programs.

Through their commitment to FFA and agricultural education, FFA Alumni help guide the students in their communities down the path to success.

www.calaged.org/Join-Alumni

If a local Alumni Affiliate is not available in your area, start one! All it takes is a passion for FFA, ten members, and the paperwork to make it official.

{ Continued on page 9 }

{ Continued from page 8 }

Top 10 FFA Alumni Membership States based on 2014-15 membership year:

1. Wisconsin, 8569
2. Illinois, 8210
3. Ohio, 4250
4. Florida, 3582
5. Oklahoma, 2915
6. Iowa, 2512
7. Tennessee, 2477
8. Texas, 2317
9. Georgia, 2284
10. Nebraska, 2243

FYI...California has only 955 Alumni Association Members.

Let's boost California's FFA Alumni Association membership up to a number representative of our FFA passion. If an Alumni Affiliate Chapter isn't available in your area, starting one is as easy as five steps!

1. Have at least 10 members that will pay dues.
2. Have current bylaws in harmony with the National FFA Alumni Bylaws.
3. Elect a council of officers.
4. Complete the Application for Chartering / Reactivating.
5. Submit the completed application for Chartering/ Reactivating to your State FFA Alumni Association (Mr. Mooney, *hmooney@cde.ca.gov*). He will complete the new alumni chapter set up process on FFA.org. You will have 30 days to submit your initial roster in FFA.org. After your roster has been submitted, you will have 30 days to pay your membership invoice. Once the state receives your payment and submits your roster for national approval, you will then be issued a charter certificate and a scroll and allowed to apply to be a part of National FFA's 501(c)3 status.

Yes, that's right, FFA Alumni Chapters are grated use of National FFA's 501(c)3 status. Another perk of membership! •

Why I Teach Ag...

Wesley Hunt

2016 North Coast Region Star Advisor
Healdsburg High School
Teaching for Seven Years

Q: What led you to the ag teaching profession?

A: I like to think my reason to become an ag teacher is unique. I didn't come from a powerhouse high school ag program or judge on a state winning team. My experience in FFA was good, but not great. I decided in high school that I wanted to be an ag teacher to provide opportunities that I never had. I knew that I wanted to do more, be more and push kids more than my personal experience.

Q: What is the most rewarding part of your job?

A: Being able to watch and support growth of students is by far my favorite part of being an ag teacher. I love reminiscing with kids when they reach senior year about how much they've learned, grown, and the miles traveled since their freshman year.

Q: What challenges you most about being an ag teacher?

A: In my mind, the most challenging part of being an ag teacher is working to please everyone. From administration, parents, students, and even community members. They all have different priorities, wants, and needs.

Q: What have you learned along the way of your career that you wish you knew on day one of teaching?

A: I'm not sure there is anything that I wish I had known day one, that I know now. The learning process and everything learned in the past seven years has helped me develop into the teacher that I am today. I think the process and evolution of being an ag teacher is really important, and part of that means that I continue to learn and develop everyday.

Q: What advice would you offer an ag teacher just starting their career?

A: Ask questions. Ask for help. Seek a mentor. One of the smartest things I ever did was to find great teachers and use them as mentors. I still call, ask questions, and get advice. That is the best thing about the Agriculture Education profession, it's a family and we genuinely want everyone to succeed.

Q: What three personal qualities do you think are valuable to be a successful ag teacher?

A: If I had to choose just three qualities, I think organization, flexibility, and drive to succeed are the most important. Being organized for me is crucial, we as ag teachers wear too many hats to be unorganized. From paperwork, FFA officers, classroom curriculum, conferences, to all the extra stuff asked of us, being organized will save your sanity. Flexibility in all areas of the three circles is equally important. Things don't always go as planned or as hoped. Being flexible helps remind our students to do the same, whether teaching a lesson, at a speaking contest, or in the show ring, roll with whatever adversity or challenges you face. If you can do it, the kids will learn by example. Finally, the drive to succeed. If you continually want to improve and be successful, you will work harder than everyone else. Sometimes those later nights, earlier mornings and dedication to the task at hand may seem overwhelming, but your success will happen. At the end of the day, being a successful ag teacher is different for everyone, but students striving for greatness is the greatest reward. •

Teach Ag • Teach Ag • Teach Ag • Teach Ag • Teach Ag • Teach Ag • Teach Ag • Teach Ag • Teach Ag

REGIONAL UPDATES

Central

The Central Region FFA Officer Team has been working hard to be able to reach out and impact as many members as they can. The region theme for the year is **"Break Through."** Encompassing over 70 chapters and 22,000 members, our region is very diverse in regards to geographical locations, backgrounds, and perspectives. However, we can overcome these barriers and "Break Through" as a region this year by building friendships with other members, motivating ourselves as well as others, and doing our part to make an impact on this organization. The Central Region Officers went to the Regional Officer Leadership Conference in the beginning of July, and learned how to grow as a team in order to grow as a region. Through fun activities and reflection sessions with the California State FFA Officers, the team learned more about themselves and their teammates. Also, through workshops with Dr. Dodson and Dipak Kumar, the officers learned effective ways of teaching to better host events such as the Chapter Officer Leadership Conference in October. Through this conference, our region has found its purpose for serving and can't wait to share it in future events!

President . . . . . Jasmine Flores
Vice President at Large . . . . . David Phillips
VP, Northern Area . . . . . Quaid Moore
VP, Southern Area . . . . . Wrangler Wheeler
Secretary. . . . . Maddie Franke
Treasurer . . . . . Robert Marchy
Reporter . . . . . Brittney Thompson
Sentinel . . . . . Prentyce Hitt

North Coast

"Crescent City to Half Moon Bay, North Coast Region all the way!" This year the North Coast Region Officer team is encouraging members to **"Make Your Mark."** At the beginning of July, our officer team was able to get together and devise goals that would help keep our 487 mile gap between our 34 chapters, to a minimum. Our biggest goal being to utilize social media. To carry out this goal we implemented our NCR Star Program in mid-July. This program allows us to spotlight a member each Monday with an outstanding SAE project to be recognized for "Making Their Mark" in their chapter, home, and community. It is our hope that other chapters throughout the North Coast Region and California take our lead and inspire members to "Make Their Mark" as well. At ROLC our team was able to collaborate and share ideas with the five other regions in California, as well as spend some one-on-one time with our State Officer Team and Regional Supervisors. North Coast Region members, this year we hope that you will "Make Your Mark" through servant leadership and career success.

President . . . . . Genevieve Regli
Vice President At Large. . . . . Mary Beth Dale
VP, Solano-Alameda Section Dominique Sloper
VP, Mendo-Lake Section . . . . Caitlyn Forrester
VP, Humboldt Del-Norte Section . . . Beth Noel
VP, Sonoma Section . . . . . Jeanette Furlong
Secretary. . . . . Jarrett Jacobson

San Joaquin

Fun and excitement are just two words that describe the Mighty Mean San Joaquin's summer. After the installation of this year's San Joaquin Regional Officer team, we went straight to work. While at our officer retreat, we discovered the unique differences in our members and how by utilizing these attributes we can come together to power our region. With that being said, it became our motivation for our theme, **"Powered By Diversity Strengthened By Unity."** As a region we acknowledge the different strengths that each member possesses and hope to build upon them by coming together and supporting each other as one. In July, the Regional Officer Team had the opportunity to connect with the State Officers as well as meet other Regional Officers throughout California while we attended the Regional Officer Leadership Conference. Not only did we create relationships with the other regional officers, we learned the importance of servant leadership and what it truly means to serve the members within our region. From Agriculture Industry tours, learning how to effectively execute workshops from Dr. Dodson, we became a team of 54 and are ready to Launch California FFA!

President . . . . . Andrew Rezendez
Vice Presidents . . . Nitin Gupta, Sierra Yeager, Mayte Magallon, Matthew Rosa, Jordyn Samper, and Bailee Stewart
Secretary. . . . . Lexie Sheerwood
Treasurer . . . . . Kaitlyn McDaniel
Reporter . . . . . Sage Clay
Sentinel . . . . . Nick Hudson

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NORTH TO SOUTH - EAST TO WEST, OUR SIX REGIONAL OFFICER TEAMS ACROSS THE STATE ARE PREPARING TO LEAD AN INCREDIBLE 2016-17 SCHOOL YEAR. WHAT DOES YOUR REGION'S TEAM HAVE PLANNED FOR YOU?

South Coast

"We've got the beach, we've got the sun, the South Coast Region is number one!" The South Coast Region has been hard at work since summer began. The regional team had a blast at the Regional Officer Leadership Conference where they learned new skills of leadership, bonded together and developed a new understanding of how to LAUNCH themselves into a selfless year of service. The fun continued at SOLC in September where our sectional leaders learned about the various agricultural pathways they can take in a world of opportunity when it comes time to take off the blue jacket. At COLC in October we challenged every single chapter leader to **"Find Their Missing Piece."** To commit themselves to extending the advocacy of agriculture in every one of their hometown chapters with passion and leadership. We have had fun meeting members all across our region but we still have a challenge for all of you! Tell us how you are going to "FIND YOUR MISSING PIECE!" Share your blue jacket story on our Instagram @southcoastregionffa using the hashtag #SCRSTORY!!

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VP, Santa Clara Section . . . . Mark Scalmanini
VP, Ventura Section . . . . . Isabel Valle
VP, Monterey Bay Section . . . . Megan Wasson
VP, Santa Barbara Section . . . . Daniel Segura
VP, San Luis Obispo Section . . . . . Brent Hill
VP, Los Angles Section . . . . . Elizabeth Gosa
Secretary. . . . . Erica Bowles
Treasurer . . . . . Matthew Umbarger
Reporter . . . . . Mariana De Leon Dominguez
Sentinel . . . . . Kyler Vernon

Southern

The Southern Region started off the year growing their brand. The Region Officer Leadership Conference (ROLC) was a great opportunity for the Southern Region Officer team. We were able to see the diversity throughout our state as well as highlight the diversity within our own region. We were also able to learn valuable skills such as putting on a workshop and connecting with our community members. The team truly became a family within our short time at ROLC. Not only working together to create a video on FFA stories, but also just spending quality time together. We had an amazing time at our Section Officer Leadership Conference (SOLC) where we met and grew with our Section Officer Teams. We look forward to working with chapter officers at Chapter Officer Leadership Conference (COLC). We are excited to serve the members this year and grow the FFA brand throughout our region.

President . . . . . Jack Grizzle
VP, High Desert Section. . . . . Alexa Walkovitz
VP, Imperial Section . . . . . Oscar Palero
VP, Orange Section . . . . . Eduardo Bribiesca
VP, Riverside Section. . . . . Haley Wilcox
VP, San Diego Section . . . . . Blake Jackson
Secretary. . . . . Sarah Drown

Superior

In everything we do, there is always room for growth. The Superior Region officer team decided to focus on blooming what has yet to come with the theme **"Grow the Future."** The journey of cultivation began with a trip to Tomales Bay for ROLC. Throughout the conference, reflections brought us closer as not only a team, but helped us to become a family. The workshops helped us to develop the skills necessary to share our growth and help each of our chapters to grow as we hosted a Chapter Officer Leadership Conference from August 27-31. Through three groups of chapter officers, Superior Region watched each team flourish with workshops, including stage presence and officer specific duties, as well as a reflection based off of Dr. Seuss's "Oh the Places You'll Go." The state officer team joined us, and encouraged chapter officers to launch their newly acquired skills into action. Superior can't wait to see our chapters and region as a whole work to "Grow the Future."

President . . . . . Rikaela Cook
VP, Shasta Section . . . . . Heather Rodriguez
VP, North Valley Section . . Maureen LaGrande
VP, Intermountain Section . . . . . Robee Knoch
VP, Sierra Buttes Section . . . . . Conner Lane
Secretary. . . . . Hailey Traynham
Treasurer . . . . . Devin Griffith
Reporter . . . . . Taylor MacKay
Sentinel . . . . . Orrin Jones
Historian . . . . . Tessa Greenough

Chapter Scoops

TULARE FFA
Helping Fire Victims

Submitted by Evan Garcia

This year, Tulare FFA has dedicated one of their chapter goals to community service. When we heard of the Erskine Fire devastation in Kern County, we immediately wanted to help. We took our chapter theme "Reach Beyond Expectations" and reached beyond our community to assist those in need. Members of Tulare FFA started to spread the word and asked friends and family for help. On Saturday, July 2nd, many generous donations were taken to the Tulare High School Farm where members of the officer team packed them away to be taken to the donation center in Bakersfield. We received 61 individual gallon jugs of water, 25 cases of water bottles, and a whole pickup truck full of clothing! While waiting for donations, the officers got a surprise visit. We would like to thank Jarrett Jacobson, the North Coast Region Secretary and Sonoma FFA Vice President, for taking time out of visiting with his family to help out and make a donation! We are thankful for Jarrett's and all of the donations we received!

IMPERIAL FFA
Learn, Lead, Succeed

Submitted by Natalia Hernandez-Maceira

The Imperial FFA Chapter in the Southern Region recently had their yearly Agriculture Orientation for all members at Imperial High School. The orientation allows the students to be exposed to all activities that are available for them throughout the year. It also covers all of the important aspects of what FFA stands for and sets the standards and goals for the year. In this session the students participated in various ice breakers to get to know each other and get them out of their comfort zones. The officers took the opportunity to make an entertaining introduction video for the students with this year's theme of "Learn, Lead, Succeed."

NEWMAN FFA
A Patch of Hope

By Maria Martinez

Two members of the Newman FFA chapter have shown what it means to truly believe in the future of agriculture. After growing vegetables in the chapter's greenhouse, they decided to start a different project. They began plans to install a pumpkin patch. Members took time out of their summer to clear an area of land by tilling the soil and setting up an irrigation system to prepare for planting. The pumpkin seeds themselves were donated by a Cal Poly professor who heard of their plan and wanted to help. After all their hard work and dedication, the pumpkin patch is now in full swing and thriving. In a year, they hope to expand the pumpkin patch and host a community pumpkin patch. They will use it to educate the public about agriculture, and to inspire more students to start agricultural projects.

{ Continued on page 13 }

Your Chapter FFA — Tell Us 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

ATWATER FFA
Our Poultry Program is No Yolk!

Submitted by Audrey Esau

Expanding access and opportunities for students to get involved and explore new opportunities towards academic success, personal growth, and career exploration is an annual objective for the Atwater High School agriculture program. Last winter and spring, with support from the district, high school, local community, agriculture industry representatives, and the ag mechanic Atwater was able to build a new poultry facility. The vision was to have a small poultry unit with about fifty laying hens. A group of agriculture students were assigned to take the responsibility of caring, feeding, and maintaining the poultry facility, while collecting, washing, and marketing the eggs to staff on campus and other community supporters. As of late summer and early fall, the chickens are producing about three dozen eggs a day. It's been a great SAE opportunity!

{ Continued from page 12 }

RED BLUFF FFA
Chapter Socials

Submitted by Madison McCarty

FFA is a huge part of many students' life here at Red Bluff High. We have many members actively involved, but are looking for more to attend our monthly get-togethers. This year the ag advisors came up with a great idea in hope to get more members to attend with the officer team's help. Instead of calling our monthly get-togethers, "meetings" we now call them "socials". Hopefully, by removing the word "meeting" will make the time less intimidating and more appealing for members to attend. The socials will include fun filled time spent together as we socialize amongst the chapter and participate in the activities we have planned for each social. The month of September was the annual swim social, October was a carnival social, and many other fun socials are scheduled for this year!

GUSTINE FFA
32nd Annual Tractor Pull

By Marco Marsigli

On Sunday, July 3rd, the Gustine FFA hosted their 32nd Annual Truck and Tractor Pull. The Truck and Tractor Pull is the longest ongoing high school pull in the nation and more than 1,000 people attended to watch the participants compete for the farthest pull. There were over a hundred pullers that pulled trucks, antique tractors, and even dragsters. FFA members helped keep the night running smoothly by assisting with the snack bar, selling tickets at the ticket booth, handing out sponsor books to the many people that came to watch, and staying to help clean up. Gustine FFA would like to thank the FFA Ag Boosters for preparing the delicious food and for the ongoing support that made the night possible.

FIREBAUGH FFA
FLDUSD New Teachers, We Welcome You!

By Jacquelin Tinoco

To start this school year off with a bang, we welcomed new teachers to the Firebaugh-Las Deltas Unified School District. We had two speakers playing music as our executive committee cheered loudly for our new teachers to the district before their meeting started. The teachers would walk in between two lines composed by our executive committee and be cheered on as they made their way into the library. The Firebaugh FFA Executive Committee also handed out Hot Tamales as a welcome gift to our district's new teachers. The new teachers seemed happy and cheerful as they were greeted and welcomed by our chapter. In the end it was a successful event in which we warmly welcomed our teachers for the 2016-2017 school year.

{ Continued from page 13 }

FRONTIER FFA
Officer Team Training

Submitted by Presley Cortez

With every new chapter officer team comes planning, preparation, and motivation to work together towards a common goal. The Frontier FFA chapter officer team kicked off their year of service over three jam-packed days at the FFA Officer Retreat, officers had the chance to learn about each others' personality, set goals for the chapter, learn how to facilitate workshops, and divide the work outlined in our Program of Activities. Next, at the San Joaquin Regional Boot Camp in San Luis Obispo, officers were challenged physically, mentally, and emotionally during two intense days of extreme obstacle challenges leaving some terrified of heights and others assured teammates had their backs. The team rounded out the summer by participating in the South Valley Sectional Chapter Officer Leadership Conference held at Frontier High School. Workshops helped officers find their strength as leaders, a will for compromise, and most importantly that teamwork makes the dream work.

DELTA CHARTER FFA
An Inaugural Year

Submitted by Ashlee Pike

Recently, the National FFA Organization passed a bill stating that charter schools were allowed to have FFA chapters. Located in the small town of Tracy, California, the Delta Charter FFA is the third charter school in the city to have an official chapter. In the time since, we have started an array of CDE teams, competed in public speaking contests, and participated in leadership conferences. Our agriculture classes have been working hard this year to create and build our school farm. Located on campus, our farm includes over 70 fruit trees, a pumpkin patch, vegetable planter boxes (which have been arranged to spell out "FFA" from a bird's eye view) a two sided free range chicken coop, and a huge greenhouse. In Delta Charter's first year as a chapter, it has successfully been noticed in the region and state, and will continue to grow and surpass expectations in the years to come.

LUCERNE VALLEY FFA
Big Changes, New Beginnings

Submitted by Alexa Walkovitz

This year, the Lucerne Valley FFA chapter has embraced change and improvement. A major change this year was the addition of a second ag instructor after 22 years with a single instructor. Because of this change, the ag program now hosts 80% of all the high school students, setting a record for FFA membership and bringing more opportunities and experiences. This has also opened the door for increased involvement in a new variety of agriculture classes, such as Ag Earth Science, Ag Biology, Horticulture, Ag Mechanics, Ag Fabrication and Design, and Ag Leadership. In addition to a second instructor, Lucerne Valley FFA has expanded its land and lab space with a new classroom near the ag mechanics shop and greenhouses. In honor of all the new changes, the officers decided that this year the theme should be centered around the new beginnings, and chose the theme, "New Horizons". •

This fall over 6,000 freshmen were introduced to the benefits and opportunities in Ag Education as they attended one of 33 Greenhand Leadership Conferences across the state.

Conference highlights...

3,465 MEMBERS COMMITTED TO RUNNING FOR AN OFFICE OR COMMITTEE CHAIR IN THE FUTURE

165 CONFERENCE BANNERS DROPPED

24,000 SAE, FFA AND CLASSROOM FUTURE GOALS SET

198 TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED

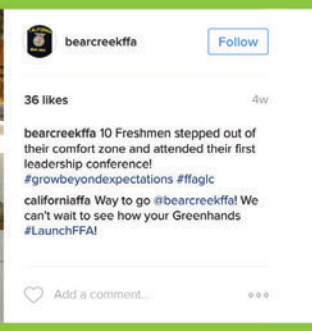
65,644 VIEWS OF #FFAglc ON INSTAGRAM (***15,458*** LIKES)

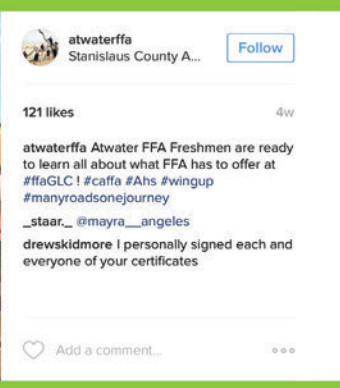
OVER ***1,000*** MINUTES OF "CELEBRATING" THE OPPORTUNITIES AND BENEFITS OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION! •

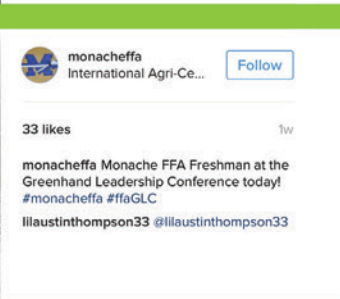
The votes are in!

GREENHAND *leadership* CONFERENCE

THE AWARD GOES TO... THE GREENHAND LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE!







Getting an "All Access Pass" to the Greenhand Leadership Conference helped me gain a new understanding of the three circle model of agriculture education. I am very interested in agriculture and getting to attend GLC was a great experience that opened my eyes.

The Greenhand Leadership Conference consisted of many sessions and team building activities, I have never experienced anything like this before! I learned a lot about FFA and agriculture education and all the opportunities it has to offer. I was taught the six benefits of of Agricultural Education: **Learning, Experience, Leadership, Competition, Travel, and Personal Growth.**

I also gained new knowledge about the opportunities I could experience like different leadership conferences such as **MFE, ALA and SLE**. I also got a better understanding of what an **SAE project** is and cannot wait to start my own SAE.

The overall experience was amazing and I wish to use what I learned in my future as an FFA member. Thank you for my teachers who selected me, to those leaders at GLC, and those fellow students I met. I would like to give a shout out to my team leader Russell because he in my opinion was the coolest facilitator!

By J.D. Burriel, Exeter FFA

Street Beat #FFAglc

SAE FOCUS

Alongside FFA and classroom instruction, Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAEs) are one of the three integrated parts of Agriculture Education. For many FFA members their FFA experience would not be the same without their **#SAEproject.** As use of the AET Record Book takes hold we get an insight into the depth of SAE projects across the state. **Data is based off of 2015 AET system users.* •

Total Gross Revenue: $3,517,094

Total SAE Hours: 404,421

Top five SAE Projects in the AET system:

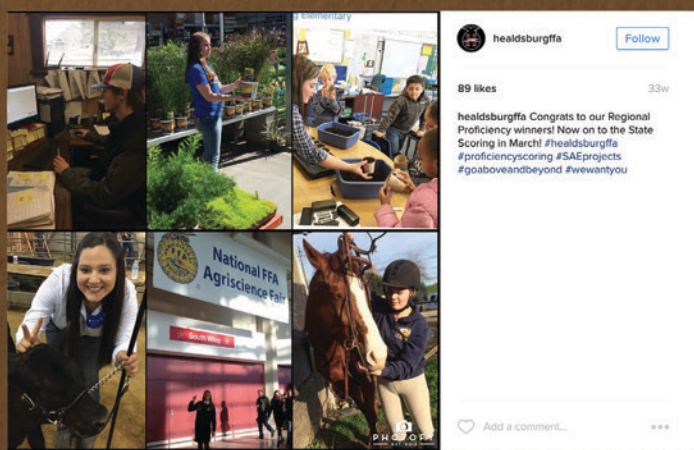
1. **Swine** *(breeding & market combined)*
2. Vegetables
3. Small Animals
4. Fabrication
5. Sheep *(breeding & market combined)*

Chapters with the most active AET users:

1. **Santa Maria**
2. Woodland-Pioneer
3. Tulare
4. Palmdale
5. Ceres-Central Valley

Total Assets: $7,883,635

Total unpaid hours: 94,600



Georgia FFA News

December 2016

Official Publication of the Georgia FFA

A Foundation Built on Giving

Sponsor Spotlight: Dr. William Flatt gives for the future, because of the past.

FFA Members "Doing to Learn" at CDE Clinics

Each year, FFA members in Georgia, and across the nation, put the FFA motto into action by participating in Career Development Events (CDEs) that help students develop real-world skills from their agricultural education curriculum. In an effort to improve those skills, the Georgia FFA hosted two CDE clinics this past fall to educate students and teachers on the subjects of floral design and livestock evaluation.

Area Teachers Melissa Riley, Josh Allen, and Trisha Lastly, along with members of the Georgia Florist's

A Floral Design CDE clinic was held at the FFA/FCCLA Center near Covington, Georgia.

Association, hosted the FFA Floral Design clinic at the FFA/FCCLA Center in Covington on Aug. 13-14. The two-day training was developed specifically for FFA members and advisors to strengthen their floral design skills as well as build confidence in their own creative ability.

The training was led and sponsored by members of the Georgia State Florist Association along with generous donations from various local florists.

The more than 250 FFA members and advisors attending this year's clinic were divided into four groups. Sessions were developed for beginners and those who are more advanced at both the junior (6th-9th grade) and senior (10th-12th grade) levels. These specialized sessions allowed students more individual attention so that they may hone their designing skills in a particular area. Beginner's sessions were for students new to floral design and focused on basic floral skills such as how to cover wire, how to make a centerpiece, how much water to put in the vase, and how to make a bow. Advanced sessions allowed students to move at a faster pace while designing more freely using skills already developed.

In September, Area Teachers Tommy Waldrop, Ricky Wheeler, and Kent Benson hosted the Georgia FFA Livestock Evaluation clinic at Camp John Hope. More than 150 students from 31 chapters attended the clinic where they judged four classes of beef cattle, three classes of hogs, two classes of sheep and one class of goats. The goat and hog classes were evaluated at the Veterans FFA school farm, while the beef cattle where evaluated at the Perry FFA school farm. The sheep classes were evaluated at Camp John Hope.

In addition to receiving training on evaluating characteristics of livestock animals, including muscle, structure and functionality; students and advisors received help with developing and delivering oral reasons for their placings.

"Career Development Events are a fantastic way to evaluate student learning and performance," said Ben Lastly, Georgia FFA's Executive Secretary. "These clinics are a great resource to develop our young people."

A Livestock Evaluation CDE clinic was held at Camp John Hope near Fort Valley, Georgia.

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Sadie Lackey (Gilmer County)

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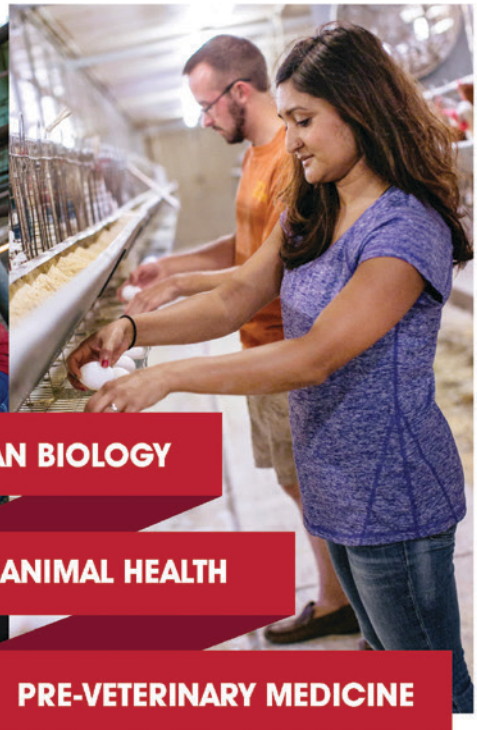

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2016-2017

Front Row (L to R) Daylon Smith, Rebecca Wallace & Shalyn Landes; Back Row (L to R) Dalton Green, Emma Long, Caleb Carr, Shelby Merrell & Case Winkler

Area 1

Front Row (L to R) Chase West, Makayla West & Bucky Joe Jackson; Back Row (L to R) Carlie Howington, Shelby Spears, Kylie Whitworth, Hannah Watkins & Kellie Smith

Area 2

Front Row (L to R) Caroline Scarborough, Katie Keen & Abbie Barton; Back Row (L to R) Jake Harris, Sierra Cannon, Beau Bradley, Aaliyah Smith & Tucker Felkins

Area 3

Meet the Area Officers on
www.geor

Area Officers

Area 4

Front Row (L to R) Katlyn Davis, Hannah Cheek & Macy Coker; Back Row (L to R) Laurabeth Bland, Abbie Dickerson, Ethan Fields, Chloe Lynch & Brittany Braddy

Area 5

Front Row (L to R) Katibeth Mims, Sydney Thomas & Ivey Cook; Back Row (L to R) Hayden Maxwell, Allen Brown, Garrett Harrell, Jamie Worsley & Kirk Beacham

Area 6

Front Row (L to R) Mattie Davis, Shaina Flowers & Hannah Exum; Back Row (L to R) Jacob Hamm, Hinkley Hood, Emily Leonard, Justin Sandlin & Clay Parker

the Georgia FFA website
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Sponsor Spotlight

Dr. William Flatt

Endowed Gift to the Georgia FFA Foundation

Through generous donations of individual and corporate donors, the Georgia FFA Foundation raises funds to support the more than 41,000 members of the Georgia FFA Association. In 2015-16, the Georgia FFA Foundation raised more than $765,000 to fund award programs, scholarships, plaques and prizes. Hundreds of individuals and corporations donate to the Georgia FFA Foundation each year. This feature is a great way to get to know a little more about some of our valued sponsors.

Dr. William "Bill" Flatt has established an endowment with the Georgia FFA Foundation by contributing $25,000 to be set aside in his name, earning interest that will help fund the Georgia FFA Foundation for many years into the future. As an endowed gift, Dr. Flatt's principal contribution of $25,000 will remain untouched; only the interest will be used to fund college scholarships for FFA members each year according to Dr. Flatt's wishes.

Dr. William Flatt was raised by his grandparents in West Tennessee. He learned a strong work ethic as a young boy by picking and chopping cotton and harvesting strawberries. Dr. Flatt became quite an entrepreneur, sharecropping for his uncle and keeping a third of the earnings. Dr. Flatt was an active FFA member and served as State President of the Tennessee FFA Association in 1947-1949. Dr. Flatt attended Bethel College and majored in animal husbandry at the University of Tennessee. Dr. Flatt was awarded one of the National Science Foundation's first graduate-student fellowships. He attended Cornell University, and, after completing his doctorate degree, Dr. Flatt accepted a position with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service, studying energy metabolism in dairy cattle.

While working at the USDA, Dr. Flatt was heavily recruited by then-UGA President, Dr. Fred Davison. Dr. Davison offered Dr. Flatt the position of Department Head for the Animal Science department. After moving to UGA, Dr. Flatt was named Director of the Agricultural Experiment Stations. In 1981, he became Dean of the College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences, a post he held until 1994. After his service as dean, Dr. Flatt joined the Department of Foods and Nutrition in the College of Family & Consumer Sciences, researching issues of human metabolism. Until he became professor emeritus in 1999, he also taught courses in both the foods and nutrition and animal and dairy science departments. Dr. Flatt reflects warmly on his time at the University of Georgia.

Dr. William Flatt served 13 years as the Dean of the University of Georgia's College of Agriculture & Environmental Sciences.

"During my 47-year-career at the University of Georgia, I had the privilege of working with many outstanding leaders who have been Georgia state FFA officers and were dedicated to using their skills and resources to improve many aspects of agriculture in Georgia, the United States and the world," Flatt said.

Dr. Flatt has been generous through his charitable giving. Giving to others is something he says his family taught him from a young age. He has established multiple scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students, together with awards for outstanding seniors, both in the College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences and the College of Family & Consumer Sciences.

"The leadership skills I learned from serving as State President of the Tennessee FFA Association have been very helpful to me in my career," Flatt said. "That experience helped me realize just how important it is to provide support for young people."

Dr. Flatt was married for 60 years to the late June Nesbitt until her death in 2009.

In 2014, Dr. Flatt married Dr. Marihope Troutman. Dr. Troutman-Flatt grew up on a dairy farm in Coweta County, Georgia. She was a Master 4-Her and involved in academic and extra-curricular activities at Newnan High School. She graduated from the University of Georgia with a degree in Home Economics Education and later received her M.S, EDS and doctorate degrees.

When asked about his willingness to give, Dr. Flatt's answer was very clear.

"There are many reasons why I think it is important to support young people in the field of agriculture," Flatt said. "First, if it hadn't been for the various scholarships I received personally during college, I might not have been able to attend. When I heard of the need for college scholarships for the outstanding young leaders in FFA, I decided to assist."

The Georgia FFA Foundation currently has seven endowed gifts honoring people who have contributed at the $25,000 level, or beyond, to

provide for the future of the Georgia FFA Foundation and the FFA members it serves across our state.

The FFA Foundation is operated by the Executive Director, Mrs. Katrina Jones; Assistant Director, Ms. Valerie Noles; and Office Manager, Mrs. Julie Freeman.

"The need for support for Georgia FFA members continues to increase as FFA membership continues to grow in our state," Jones said. "The Foundation is committed to investing for perpetuity of Georgia FFA."

Contributions to the Foundation are deductible for the donor under Section 170 of the Code. As a full-service charity, the Foundation may accept all types of contributions. Gifts may include endowments, real or personal property, retirement accounts, life insurance, charitable trusts and/or testamentary bequests.

"When I heard of the need for college scholarships for the outstanding young leaders in the FFA, I decided to assist."

-Dr. William Flatt

"In a little more than 10 years, Georgia FFA will celebrate its 100th anniversary," Jones said. "We want to ensure that in 100 more years, FFA members will continue to be supported in their endeavors to strengthen agriculture and become responsible and productive citizens."

For more information about any of these options contact Katrina Jones at the Georgia FFA Foundation at (800) 323-0124 or visit the Foundation online at www.georgiaffafoundation.org.

Harris Takes Area Officer Role All The Way to Atlanta

Harris County FFA Member & Area 3 Officer Selected to Serve on State School Superintendent's Student Advisory Council

State School Superintendent Richard Woods has selected 108 Georgia students to serve on his 2016-17 Student Advisory Council, and a Harris County FFA member is among the group selected to serve.

Jake Harris, the 2016-17 Area 3 Treasurer, is a Junior at Harris County High School in Hamilton, Georgia. Harris' agricultural education teacher and FFA Advisor is Mr. Jay Borden.

Throughout the school year, the council of students will meet with Superintendent Woods to discuss the impact of state policies in the classroom. Members of the Student Advisory Council will also discuss other issues related to education, serve as the Superintendent's ambassadors to their respective schools, and participate in service projects to benefit schools and students.

"Meeting with my Student Advisory Council has been, and will continue to be, an invaluable part of my decision-making process," Superintendent Woods said. "To develop child-focused, classroom-centered policies, we have to hear directly from students. We can only improve their educational experience by bringing them to the table."

Members were selected from a pool of more than 800 students in public schools across the state who applied to serve on the council. Students were chosen based on the strength of their essay answers, which focused on their ideas for public education and the ways their own educational experience could be improved.

Harris was selected for a second term after serving on the 2015-16 Council as well.

"Through this program, I have learned a lot about how government actually works; realizing that what may work in South Georgia may not actually be effective in Metro Atlanta," Harris said. "I am excited each time I visit with Superintendent Woods, his staff, and fellow advisory team members to discuss agriculture education and FFA."

Meetings of the Student Advisory Council will be held at the Georgia Department of Education's offices in Atlanta.

"Jake and I discussed the impact that he wanted to have while serving on the Superintendent's Advisory Council," Borden said. "Jake wanted to focus on issues in agriculture education and career technical education such as teacher recruitment, shortage of trained employees in agriculture, and the impact of FFA on student development."

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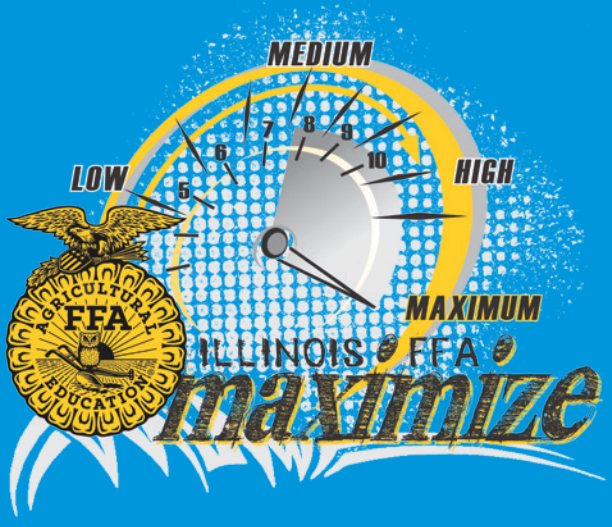
ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION FFA

Winter 2016-17

2016-17 State Officer Team



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What's next for Illinois FFA? Visit us at www.illinoisffa.weebly.com.

Career Development Event Results

Congratulations to all teams competing in the Horse Career Development Event held at Black Hawk College East Campus in Galva! Thanks go out to Aaron and Kindra Callahan, BHC faculty, staff and students for conducting an excellent event!

Horse Judging Reasons

In the Reasons Division, 17 schools, 14 teams and 56 individuals competed. Congratulations to the Superior Teams and Individuals competing in this year's contest!

TOP TEAMS

Rank	School	Score
1	Mt. Vernong	1480
2	Olympia	1469
3	Geneseo	1469

TOP INDIVIDUALS

Rank	Individual	School	Score
1	Ellie Korthals	Geneseo	505
2	Reid Deichman	Mt. Vernon	504
3	Hannah Casey	Olympia	504
4	Hallie Horsman	Shelbyville	504
5	Claire McCombs	Normal Community	498
6	Lillian Schierloh	Lena Winslow	494
7	Brooke Bastian	Olympia	493
8	Austin Reed	Cambridge	492
9	Sarah Korthals	Geneseo	491
10	Anessa Montgomery	Mt. Vernon	489

Forestry

Congratulations to all teams competing in the Forestry Career Development Event held at Southern Illinois University Carbondale! 12 schools, 12 teams and 57 individuals competed. Congratulations to the Superior Teams and Individuals competing in this year's contest!

TOP TEAMS

Rank	School	Score
1	Olney	1547
2	Cumberland	1477

TOP INDIVIDUALS

Rank	Individual	School	Score
1	Penny Flood	Cumberland	556
2	Seth Mitchell	Olney	539
3	Jessica Shilling	Olney	505
4	Jared Boehl	Olney	503
5	Garrett Williams	Flora	489
6	Ryley Brown	Cumberland	470
7	Evan Walker	Olney	470
8	Colton Shaffer	Red Hill	464
9	Shane Ormond	Liberty	453
10	Macey Craig	Cumberland	451

Horse Judging Non-Reasons

In the Non-Reasons Division, 53 schools, 47 teams and 187 individuals competed. Congratulations to the Superior Teams and Individuals competing in this year's contest!

TOP TEAMS

Rank	School	Score
1	New Berlin	1121
2	Orion	1089
3	Normal West	1087
4	Newark	1086
5	Durand-Pecatonica-Winnebago	1085
6	Payson-Seymour	1083
7	Eureka	1081
8	Prairie Central	1073

TOP INDIVIDUALS

Rank	Individual	School	Score
1	Amanda	Rochelle	391
2	Jessica Hall	United	388
3	Katie Barnett	Farmington	386
4	Kirsten Deck	Prairie Central	386
5	Erin Lakamp	New Berlin	385
6	Miraya Smith	Newark	384
7	Averie Innes	New Berlin	380
8	Julie Davis	Oregon	377
9	Sydney DePauw	ROWVA	376
10	Ashley Wiley	Cambridge	376

MAXIMIZING Awareness

Corn Congress

Some of the events the state officer team has been attending has focused around one center theme: Advocacy. One event that this was highlighted in was Corn Congress. Back in July the entire state officer team of 30 had the opportunity to travel to Washington D.C. for Corn Congress. This was made possible because of Illinois Corn Growers Association. During this trip the team had a variety of experiences. On the day of arrival the attendees went on a moonlight tour of D.C., but soon after that, we commenced with our business. The next day was full of meetings to expand our knowledge of the issues facing the agriculture industry. These meetings were with members and employees of the Farm Bureau Federation, United States Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency and Crop Life America. During these meetings we learned crucial information about each organizations' stance on issues like restrictions on atrazine and the Clean Water Act. These highly-needed details led us into the next day's duties of meeting with staffers of U.S. Congressmen. It was then we were paired up with members of Illinois Corn Growers Association to discuss with these staffers our feelings on issues that the agriculture industry is facing and the action we felt legislation needs to take. Overall the experience was incredibly valuable. It is not every day FFA members get a firsthand look at how the government works and what we can do to change it. We have much thanks to extend to Illinois Corn Growers Association for their support in sending us on this amazing journey.

State Fair

In August the team got together for the Illinois State Fair to take on numerous duties. The FFA Barnyard was the main attraction for Illinois FFA again this year. There, we had a variety of animals you may see on a stereotypical farm, such as pigs, sheep and a cow, to name a few. We also focused on answering the questions of the fairgoers to better expand their knowledge of the agriculture industry. This year we were also in attendance on Aug. 16 for Ag Day. This day was focused on praising Illinois agriculture. The officers helped with an assortment of the day's events like the Sale of Champions and a morning awards brunch. It was there that Rick Petitt received the honor of being named the recipient of the Excellence in Teaching Award.

2016-17 Section Presidents

SECTION 1

Name: Daniel Hartman

FFA Chapter: West Carroll

Parents: Dan & Janell Hartman

SAE: Wildlife Management, Swine Placement

Favorite FFA Activities: Parliamentary Procedure, Agronomy and Livestock

Future Plans: To attend Highland Community College, then to transfer to a four-year university to pursue a degree in Environmental Sciences.

SECTION 2

Name: Ryan Reeverts

FFA Chapter: Byron

Parents: Terry & Pam Reeverts

SAE: Swine Production, Poultry Production, Vegetable Production, Forage Production, Ag Sales – Ent.

Favorite FFA Activities: Meats CDE and my SAE's

Future Plans: I will be attending Highland Community College this fall as a student in their agriculture transfer program. I want to transfer to the University of Wisconsin – Platteville and obtain an Agriculture Business Degree. I then plan to return to my family farm and continue my agriculture endeavors that I have built through my Supervised Agriculture Experiences.

SECTION 3

Name: Chase Gripp

FFA Chapter: Bureau Valley

Parents: Chad & TeNeille Gripp

SAE: Specialty Crop, Corn, Fiber and Oil Crops, and Wildlife

Favorite FFA Activities: Public Speaking and Ag Mechanics

Future Plans: Attend Purdue University and major in Ag Systems Management

SECTION 4

Name: Robert Janssen

FFA Chapter: Abingdon-Avon

Parents: Chris & Jody Janssen

SAE: Beef, Poultry

Favorite FFA Activities: Parliamentary Procedure, Barnyard zoo, State Convention

Future Plans: Graduate from Spoon River College, attend Missouri Auction School and run my own auction service.

SECTION 5

Name: Owen Mallery

FFA Chapter: Putnam County

Parents: David & Denise Mallery

SAE: Princeton Game and Fish Caretaker and M&M Construction Builder

Favorite FFA Activities: Parliamentary Procedure, Ag Sales, Conventions

Future Plans: I want to go to college for medicine or law and join the Army afterwards.

SECTION 6

Name: Chase Clausen

FFA Chapter: Sycamore

Parents: Jeffrey & Anna Clausen

SAE: Beef Entrepreneurship

Favorite FFA Activities: FFA Week Dodge Ball Tournament

Future Plans: I plan on attending Kishwaukee College then transfer to either Iowa State or University of Illinois to study Animal Science. After college, I hope to become a large animal nutritionist.

SECTION 7

Name: Kendall Nelson

FFA Chapter: Newark

Parents: Philip & Carmen Nelson

SAE: I have a Beef Production Book which consists of raising and showing my own stock. I manage breeding and feeding decisions. Also, I have a Swine Production Book. I farrow to finish show pigs and feeder pigs. I then select certain ones from what I raise to exhibit throughout the year. After that, I have a Corn Production Book. I keep records on a 40-acre field throughout the year. Lastly, I have a Soybean Production book in which, just like my corn book, I keep records on and try to change varieties each year to increase my yield.

Favorite FFA Activities: Agronomy CDE, Livestock Judging CDE, and working our chapters Haunted Corn Maze.

Future Plans: I plan to attend the University of Illinois and major in Crop Sciences after high school.

SECTION 8

Name: Maddie Poole

FFA Chapter: Chicago Ag Sciences

Parents: Thomas & Susan Poole

SAE: For my SAE, I worked at the Mahyco Hybrid Seed Company in Jalna, India as a World Food Prize Intern. There, I isolated different bacteria from wild plants and tested them for nitrogen fixation, phosphate solubilization, IAA production, and antifungal properties. The bacteria was then used to enhance rice growth. I also completed research with the University of Illinois designing heat exchangers in the department of Ag engineering and conducted independent experiments to maximize biodiesel efficiency.

Favorite FFA Activities: Salute to Ag day, Chapter Lock-In, State Convention

Future Plans: I will be majoring in Agricultural and Biological Engineering in the College of ACES at the University of Illinois.

SECTION 9

Name: Skip Riddle

FFA Chapter: Tri-Valley

Parents: Renee & Eric Riddle

SAE: Grain Production Entrepreneurship, Fiber and Oil Crop Production Entrepreneurship

Favorite FFA Activities: Land Use and Soils CDE

Future Plans: Attending Parkland Community College in the fall of 2017 and transferring to Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

SECTION 10

Name: Lyndsey Neukomm

FFA Chapter: Cissna Park FFA

Parents: Walter & Charlene Neukomm

SAE: Safety

Favorite FFA Activities: Washington Leadership Conference , FFA Camp, Dairy Judging, State and National Conventions

Future Plans: I am attending Parkland for the next two years and studying Agricultural Business and Management. I plan to transfer to ISU or SIUC after.

SECTION 11

Name: Brittany Twidwell

FFA Chapter: Southeastern

Parents: Cindy & Rick Twidwell

SAE: Small Animal Care (Rabbits)

Favorite FFA Activities: Parliamentary Procedures and Ag Legislative Day

Future Plans: I plan on attending a Junior College then transferring to a University.

SECTION 12

Name: Addy Stufflebeam

FFA Chapter: Cuba

Parents: Terry Stufflebeam & Corrina Freiheit

SAE: Food services at Dairy Queen, diversified horticulture and vegetable productio.

Favorite FFA Activities: Agronomy and public speaking contests

Future Plans: I plan on attending Western Illinois University to major in agriculture education.

SECTION 13

Name: Mazi Walker

FFA Chapter: Winchester

Parents: Dena & Thad Walker

SAE: Sheep Production

Favorite FFA Activities: Parliamentary Procedure and Livestock Judging

Future Plans: Attend a four year college and graduate with a major in Ag Business and a minor in Animal Science

SECTION 14

Name: Grace Gerdes

FFA Chapter: Petersburg PORTA

Parents: Gary & Marisa Gerdes

SAE: Diversified Crop Production, Fiber and/or Oil Production, Grain Placement/ Entrepreneurship

Favorite FFA Activities: National FFA Week, State Fair Work Contract, Agronomy CDE, Chapter Farm Show, Chapter and Section Banquets, and FBYC

Future Plans: I plan to attend a four-year University with a double major in Agribusiness and Agronomy.

SECTION 15

Name: Jason Weller

FFA Chapter: Northwestern

Parents: Wayne & Shanda Weller

SAE: Beef Production Entrepreneur

Favorite FFA Activities: LTS, Ag Sales, Poultry and Conventions

Future Plans: Go to Lincoln Land to study Ag Business for the first couple years then transfer to a bigger university.

SECTION 16

Name: Rebekah Nash

FFA Chapter: Central A&M

Parents: David & Karen Nash

SAE: Swine Production Entrepreneurship

Favorite FFA Activities: My favorite FFA activities are CDEs such as record book judging, livestock judging and Veterinary science. Also, I enjoy volunteering in my community through my chapter.

Future Plans: I plan on finishing my associate degree at Lake Land College, and then I would like to move onto a university to study in an agricultural field.

SECTION 17

Name: Sara Edgar

FFA Chapter: Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley

Parents: Scott Edgar & Stacy Deaton

SAE: Landscape Management

Favorite FFA Activities: Public Speaking and Parliamentary Procedure

Future Plans: Attend the University of Michigan and double major in child psychology and political science.

SECTION 18

Name: Dalton Painter

FFA Chapter: Shiloh

Parents: Tom & Karen Painter

SAE: Turf/Grass Management

Favorite FFA Activities: Food Science

Future Plans: Receive a master's degree in Agricultural Business.

SECTION 19

Name: Brooke Krankel

FFA Chapter: Greenville

Parents: Chris & Kim Krankel

SAE: Food Service, Turf Grass Management

Favorite FFA Activities: Parliamentary Procedure, trips with my Chapter and meeting other members

Future Plans: For my future plans, I would like to attend college and graduate with majors in agriculture and minors in math and science. I hope that with my experience in agriculture that I can get a job doing what I love, whether it is ag engineering, ag education, or animal science. I plan to support FFA and agriculture for the rest of my life and hope to continue to grow from it.

SECTION 20

Name: Alex Walden

FFA Chapter: Stewardson-Strasburg

Parents: Kent & Jennifer Walden

SAE: Dairy Production – Placement

Favorite FFA Activities: Dairy Judging, Public Speaking, State and National Convention

Future Plans: I plan to attend a university majoring in Dairy Science. I then plan to move back to the family dairy and eventually start my own herd.

SECTION 21

Name: Claire Eggerman

FFA Chapter: Carlyle

Parents: Mike & Kim Eggerman

SAE: Specialty Animal-Honey Bees, Outdoor Recreation

Favorite FFA Activities: Job Interview CDE, Prepared Public Speaking CDE, Illinois FFA Leadership Camp

Future Plans: I plan to attend a four-year university and achieve a degree in agricultural education with a minor in agriculture communications.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

Section Presidents, Continued

SECTION 22

Name: Joseph Birrittier

FFA Chapter: Waterloo

Parents: Don & Gina Birrittier

SAE: Diversified Horticulture

Favorite FFA Activities: Parliamentary Procedure and Public Speaking

Future Plans: I plan on going to a major university majoring in biochemistry and becoming an agricultural scientist.

SECTION 23

Name: Rees Shelby

FFA Chapter: Edwards County

Parents: Roger & Charlotte Shelby

SAE: Beef Production

Favorite FFA Activities: FFA Leadership Camp and Conventions

Future Plans: I plan on running my own mechanics shop in West Salem, IL.

SECTION 24

Name: Allyssa Barnes

FFA Chapter: Shawnee

Parents: Jeff & Nicole Barnes

SAE: Food Service, Home and Community Development, Agriculture Communications

Favorite FFA Activities: Horticulture CDE, Parliamentary Procedures and Agronomy CDE

Future Plans: I am currently majoring in Agriculture Education at SIU Carbondale to one day teach in the classrooms.

SECTION 25

Name: Max Allbritten

FFA Chapter: Vienna

Parents: David & Patty Allbritten

SAE: Beef Production

Favorite FFA Activities: Ag Sales, Livestock Judging and Soil Judging

Future Plans: Attend McGill University for a bachelor's degree in animal science with a focus in ruminant nutrition.

Officer Tracks

FFA LEADERSHIP CAMP

This year nearly 300 FFA members came together at Allerton Park in Monticello, IL for a week full of fun, fellowship and mosquitoes. The week started on July 25 when camp staff and the section presidents came to train for the days ahead. It was not until Tuesday that all the campers arrived. It was then group photos were taken, an obstacles course was conquered, volleyball and quiz bowl were battled out. The night ended, as every night does at camp, with a slideshow and reflections. The next day was loaded with even more excitement as campers engaged in water-filled versions dodgeball, kickball and a variety of other activities in the Ag Olympics. It was not long after the games that campers showed off their best dance moves in the Red and Blue Dance. Thursday was called for the famous Red vs. Blue Water Balloon War. A talent show was done to close up the night. Finally, on Friday it was time to say our goodbyes. It was amazing to see the growth each FFA member had in character as they left camp. The development of leadership, teamwork and communication skills during the course of the camp in each camper was extraordinary. They all truly MAXIMIZED each of these qualities.

STAR CONFERENCES

At the start of each school year the major state officers hold conferences to go over the activities and responsibilities expected from section officer teams. These conferences were broken up by district at five different locations. During the conferences, teams come together to plan their Leadership Training Schools and get to know the state officer who will be traveling with them on chapter visits. This year the majors decided to add a facilitation training aspect to the conference. After watching how impactful the training the section presidents received at the National Leadership Conference for State Officers was, we believed it would be great to spread that knowledge to their teammates. We had an outstanding time putting the five conferences on.

STATE PRESIDENT CONFERENCE

While Zach, Corrine and Cody were having a blast at camp, JC and Paxton had other business to attend to. Every July, the State President and State Vice-President or State Secretary from each State FFA Association gather in Washington, D.C., for the State Presidents' Conference. This year, JC and Paxton had the opportunity to attend. During this conference, they got to tour various different sites about our American history. After all the touring and activities came the work of the conference. At State Presidents' Conference, all the state associations decide what issues they would like talked about at National Convention. Once the committees are decided, the states pick which committees they want to be a part of. Then the delegates are assigned or elected leadership roles within those committees and pick key talking points to bring up at National Convention to the rest of the delegate body.

Paxton Morse
State Vice President

GREENHAND CONFERENCES

This year, the major state officers attended three Greenhand Conferences across the state. The first one they attended was held by Western Illinois University at Macomb High School. Greenhand members from all over western Illinois came together to focus on how they could transform to become an even better individual. The workshops focused on transforming one's self, competition, responsibility and leadership. The night was concluded with a keynote given by David Erickson, Vice President of the Illinois Farm Bureau.

Southern Illinois University-Carbondale hosted the next Greenhand Conference. The greenhand members learned a variety about leadership and the FFA. Alongside the conference, chapter officers received their own training at the Chapter Officer Leadership Training event SIUC also hosted. A blast was had by all that attended the event.

Greenhands traveled to central Illinois for University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's Greenhand Conference. The theme for the night's events was "Wizard of Oz." Students were able to follow the yellow brick road to finding out how they could gain wisdom, find their passions and have a brighter future through FFA. The night was concluded with a reflection given by the major state officers.

Thank you to all the universities that hosted the conferences. They were all amazing times and very rewarding to all who attended.

Officer Tracks, Continued

LET'S TALK ABOUT FOOD

Illinois has a history of trending agricultural companies working to keep agriculture current and taking strides to inform the average consumer about food production and where it comes from. Brandt is one of these companies. With the help of Winfield and the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance, Brandt launched the Let's Talk Food event at Chicagoland Motor Speedway on Sept. 17. This event was an opportunity to engage with the public about where their food comes from, as well as answer questions from leading agricultural companies and ag media about how to best engage with consumers of all ages and walks of life. This is where Illinois FFA was able to serve.

Cody Suddeth, Lyndsey Neukomm and myself alongside students from the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences took part in an youth engagement round table where we discussed how to best engage with Millennials and Generation X, how we have advocated for agriculture this year, and how we can work alongside agricultural companies to ensure that our advocacy efforts are both current and effective. Once our work was done we were able to meet both drivers of the Let's Talk Food cars, Justin Allgaier and Dakota Armstrong, and then we took to the racetrack to watch the final regular season Xfinity series race before The Chase.

It was an exciting race, one that had an intriguing finish in which Justin Allgaier was able to obtain a solid top 5 finish! It was a great event and we are so grateful to have been a part of it. Huge thank you to Brandt, Winfield, and the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance for their sponsorship and allowing us to be a part of it.

J.C. Campbell, State President

GROWMARK ANNUAL MEETING

The GROWMARK Annual Meeting was held from Aug. 30 to Sept. 1 at the Hilton in Chicago. Here, JC, Paxton, Zach, Corrine and Cody spent the week meeting with GROWMARK employees and board members, learning about the cooperative and hearing about what is NEXT in its future. However, Illinois FFA was not the only FFA Association represented. Wisconsin and Iowa sent members to the Windy City. Ottawa, Canada also sent young leaders to represent their province. At the start of the meeting the majors carried in flags as the grand opening. It was during this first session that JC gave a speech alongside the presidents of the other states represented at the meeting. Following the business meeting we heard from many different keynotes that predicted what is NEXT for the economy and how to shape ourselves as the NEXT generation of leaders. The opportunity to attend this meeting was magnificent. Thank you GROWMARK for inviting us.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR ILLINOIS FFA?

Just as GROWMARK employees and affiliates reflected on what is next for their company we as an association believe it is also important to look ahead towards the future. There are a variety of events coming up for Illinois FFA Members to participate in.

On Jan. 27-28 the Illinois FFA Alumni Annual Conference will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn Champaign/Urbana. This is a fabulous event for FFA members and alumni members alike. On Friday night an auction is held with numerous items to be sold to the highest bidder. The money raised from this auction goes to support not only the FFA Alumni, but members through scholarships they provide for events like Washington Leadership Conference, 212, and FFA Leadership Camp. New this year is that the auction will only be Friday night. Saturday will be saved for the Alumni Business Meeting, Roundtables and other idea sessions as well. Don't miss out on this spectacular event!

This winter, a whole week of celebration for the organization we love is coming up: FFA Week. This year, the festivities are Feb. 19 through the 25. During the week, chapters from all across the nation go out and show the amazing things their chapters do. It is a great time to promote FFA and show the community what a great industry agriculture is.

THE IMPACT

ANA FFA NEWS INDIANA FFA NEWS INDIANA FFA NEWS INDIANA FFA NEWS INDIANA FFA NEW

During District Kickoffs chapters focused on the FFA Vision: Growing Leaders, Building Communities, and Strengthening Agriculture.

WINTER 2016-17

Indiana FFA Social Media
Website: www.inffa.org -- Blog: www.indianaffa.blogspot.com
Facebook: Indiana FFA Organization -- Twitter & Instagram: @IndianaFFA -- Snapchat: inffa

LEAH JACOBS
State Reporter

By Jessica Mars

LEAH'S TIMELINE

Freshman Year:
- National Novice Chapter Meeting
- Livestock Evaluation
- Crops Evaluation
- Star Greenhand

Sophomore Year:
- Livestock Evaluation
- Livestock Skill-a-thon
- Meats Evaluation

Junior Year:
- District VIII Sentinel
- National Livestock Skill-a-thon
- Gold - National Meats Evaluation

Senior Year:
- District VIII Vice President
- Chapter Vice President
- District Star Farmer
- Gold - National Food Science
- Gold - National Swine Prod. Proficiency

GET THE FACTS

Birthday: January 17, 2007
Parents: Scott and Cindy Jacobs
Sibling: Kyle
Hometown: Shirley, IN
FFA Chapter: Eastern Hancock FFA
Advisors: Natalie Schilling, Sarah Williams, Scott Jacobs, and Diana Arellano
Favorite Food: Sweets
Favorite Movie: The Help
Favorite Pastime: Showing Pigs
Favorite Sport: Volleyball
Favorite Animal: Pigs
Favorite Color: Coral
Favorite Music: Country

FUTURE PLANS

Continue in Agricultural Education at Purdue University, minor in Animal Science

THE TEAM VOTED LEAH...

Most likely to complete the Milk Challenge.

"I truly admire Leah's determination and willingness to persevere. Even when things do not fall in her favor, she picks herself up, dusts herself off, and tries to figure out another way to handle the situation. I believe this quality, along with her ability to relate to others, allows her to be a great leader. This is not only for FFA members during her year of service, but also the people that have been around her in the past and will be in her future. I know that Leah Jacobs has had a tremendous impact on my life and I am so lucky to have her as a friend." - Brianna Lammers, Friend

"Leah's pure drive and passion for the FFA and its members highly qualifies her to be a state officer. Doing pretty much every FFA activity possible, she has a great understanding of the wide variety of opportunities within the organization. She has a true desire for impacting members of the FFA, ultimately giving back to an organization that has impacted herself. Leah has chosen the career path of agricultural education, a true testament of her passion for student growth, FFA, and overall the agriculture industry." - Sarah Williams, Advisor

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

OUR MEMBERS MAKE US SHINE!

BY LOGAN GLASSBURN

Jakob Harsin

Chapter: Lebanon
SAE: Sheep Entrepreneurship
Favorite Quote: "Whether you think you can or you think you can't - - you're right." - Henry Ford
Hobbies outside of FFA: Auto Mechanics, Wrestling
Favorite CDE: Parliamentary Procedure

Deven Lemen

Chapter: Crothersville
SAE: Vegetable Production
FFA has given me: the sense of something greater than myself by participating in community service.
Hobbies outside of FFA: Camping, Spending time with Family and Friends
Favorite CDE: Floriculture

Gracie Johnson

Chapter: Eastern Hancock
SAE: Sheep Placement
FFA has given me: a sense of belonging and leadership skills that will last a lifetime.
Hobbies outside of FFA: Softball, 4H, Vet Science, Church
Favorite CDE: Dairy Evaluation

Tommy Gutwein

Chapter: Rensselaer Central
SAE: Veterinary Science and Agricultural Education
Favorite Quote: "A mile of highway will take you a mile, but a mile of runway will take you anywhere." - Unknown
Hobbies outside of FFA: Flying Airplanes, Scuba Diving, and Showing Pigs
Favorite CDE: Livestock Judging

Sponsor Shoutout

by Nathan Blume

Wabash Valley Power Association

Wabash Valley Power Association is a transmission electric cooperative association, the power association is a not-for-profit association that works in the states of Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, with 23 different locations. The Wabash Valley Power Association powers over 311,000 homes, schools, and businesses. The Wabash Valley Power Association is headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana and is the 15th largest generation and transmission cooperative in America.

The Wabash Valley Power Cooperative is a new sponsor for Indiana FFA. At the 2016 Indiana FFA State Convention, Wabash Valley Power Association co-sponsored with Ice Miller LLP in order to make the 6th general session such a huge success. Kara Baker stated, "Through Wabash Valley Power's support of the Indiana FFA, we are excited to help leaders foster a love of learning and a passion for leading." The Indiana FFA Association and Foundation is extremely thankful for their support and hope it can continue for years to come.

Wabash Valley Power
energy smart
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Indiana Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association

The Indiana Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association also known as the ITOBA is ran in conjunction with the National Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association, in order to represent and protect the Indiana Horseman, so they have a voice to be heard during the enforcement of policy change. The Association works alongside the Indiana Horse Racing Commission and other legislators across the state of Indiana. The ITOBA is undergoing numerous projects in order to enhance its involvement and increase membership.

The ITOBA is a brand new sponsor this year for Indiana FFA. ITOBA gave $2,000 to the Horse and Pony Career Development Event and the Equine Science Entrepreneurship proficiency. It is with the gracious giving hands of organizations, such as ITOBA that the Indiana FFA can properly function. We cannot thank this amazing organization nearly enough and we hope for continued support.

Photos from 2016 Equine Science Entrepreneurship State Finalists.

> The ITOBA believes, "that the mission to promote and encourage the growth of the Thoroughbred industry in Indiana is accomplished, in part by supporting organizations like Indiana FFA."

Where are they Now?

an interview with Eric Steiner

by Leah Jacobs

Mr. Eric Steiner was a member of the South Adams FFA Chapter where he served twice as the Chapter Secretary. Additionally, he was a District VI Officer for multiple years holding the Sentinel, Reporter and President positions. Mr. Steiner was also honored to serve as the State Reporter on the 1996-1997 State Officer Team. Other achievements include earning his American FFA Degree, being named second overall in the National Soils CDE and being selected as a National Finalist in the Agricultural Communications Proficiency. To top it off, he was a member of the 4th Place State Parliamentary Procedure Team, and a winner of the Essay, Public Speaking and Leadership Ambassador CDES. Mr. Steiner also served as the Summer Intern in 2001 and has continued his support of the Indiana FFA Foundation as sponsor of the Leadership Ambassador CDE.

He shares, "FFA provided the foundation for everything I'm doing – my role is to think, strategize, listen, explore, collaborate, follow, lead, solve problems, communicate, help, learn, influence, and make a positive impact with our family, our church, our company, and our local and wider community." As Director of U.S. Government Affairs for Elanco Animal Health based in Washington, DC, Mr. Steiner leads Elanco's U.S. Federal and State government affairs team. This includes engagement on antibiotics, vaccines, international trade, and innovation policies.

Mr. Steiner has this advice for Indiana FFA members; "Take advantage of every opportunity to become a better writer, a better speaker, a better learner, protect your integrity, and prepare and compete every chance you get with everything you have to win – win with humility and lose with determination to improve – and here's why – this is the pathway to increase your capacity to serve others. That's what it's all about."

"Win with Humility and Lose with Determination to Improve"

Three Times the Charm

Danville FFA Members...
Win Three Different State Demonstrations...
Three Years in a Row!

Sarah Crone's and Cody Swafford's passion for demonstrations first sparked when their agricultural educator and FFA Advisor, Mr. Duane Huge, encouraged them to compete in the contest. Throughout the past three years, the best friend duo has won three consecutive state champions in three different demonstration areas – Animal Science (2014, Treating Horse Abscesses), Food Science (2015, Sphereification of Juice) and Plant and Soil Science (2016, N.F.T. Hydroponics).

Through lots of practice and giving their demonstrations to whoever would listen to them, they achieved great success throughout the Demonstrations Career Development Event. Sarah recommends, "Pick something you are either passionate about or super curious about, and if you don't care about what you are demonstrating about, why should the judges?" They advise that you have a partner that completes your weaknesses and matches your devotion.

Both partners encourage younger members to "Go for it!" and promote the public speaking, teaching and organization skills that you will gain. Their demonstrations have allowed them to have fun, grow as leaders and transform into advocates for the agriculture industry. This CDE has fostered skills that they will continue to use in their future careers. Cody and Sarah's passion and dedication drove them to great success and they encourage you to set your goals high and reach for the stars as you begin your path to success within the Demonstration CDE.

by Emily Dougherty

NATHAN BLUME
State Treasurer

By Chaela Minor

NATHAN'S TIMELINE

Freshman Year:
- Horse Evaluation
- Poultry Evaluation

Sophomore Year:
- Horse Evaluation
- Poultry Evaluation
- Essay CDE
- Plant and Soil Science Demo

Junior Year:
- Chapter President
- 4th Place, State Horse Evaluation
- 5th Place, State Poultry Evaluation
- 2nd Place, State Essay

Senior Year:
- Chapter President
- District I Treasurer
- National Horse Evaluation

GET THE FACTS

Birthday: June 16, 1998
Parents: Chris and Gina Blume
Siblings: Jackson, Grace, and Lucy
Hometown: Morocco, Indiana
FFA Chapter: North Newton FFA
Advisors: Ron DeYoung & Sabrina Tarter
Favorite Food: Salad
Favorite Movie: Anything with Morgan Freeman
Favorite Pastime: Swimming
Favorite Animal: Alpaca
Favorite Color: Green
Favorite Music: Country

FUTURE PLANS

Attend Purdue University majoring in Agronomy and Agricultural Economics.

THE TEAM VOTED NATHAN...

Most likely to be a Politician.

"Nathan is a very conscientious student and always will be. He takes his education seriously and has clear goals about his future. Enthusiasm and dedication are two of the qualities that make him an awesome FFA member. He made quite an impact on our members at North Newton over the years. I have no doubt he will influence many Indiana FFA members this year to get more excited and involved in agriculture and FFA. Nathan truly demonstrates "premier leadership, personal growth, and career success!" - Ron DeYoung, Advisor

"Nathan was and will always be the type of friend to keep his word and give his best effort to succeed. A unique quality about Nathan is his lack of selfishness. He has always done his very best to help other's in the community knowing he might have to lose a few hours of sleep completing his daily tasks. Throughout a person's life, friends can come and go. Some of which will leave a bad impression and others will bring a new value to your life. Nathan Blume has brought joy and inspiration to my life as well as many others. Nathan is the perfect example of a friend and an all-around leader in the community."
- Demitrius Kikalos, Friend

Stationed by the Owl

Advisor Spotlight

by Sneha Jogi

Mrs. Katie Schneider

Franklin County FFA

Quick Facts

1. Has been teaching for 4 years.

2. BS Degree in Agronomy, Masters in Education.

3. Working in the Ag Industry provides a different perspective on teaching.

4. Teaches 8 agriculture courses each day with Horticulture as her favorite.

5. Advises and Teaches at the same school she was a member. Enjoys seeing both growth and traditions of the chapter.

"Mrs. Schneider's passion for agriculture and FFA has blossomed during the short time she has been at the helm of our program. Our chapter size has doubled and our members have adopted her contagious positive attitude that has amplified their involvement. She pushes each and every one of her students to their full potential and provides a great example for true success. I could not have asked for a more driven, caring, and dedicated advisor."

- Grace Moster, Student

"She is not only my teacher, but also my role model. If it was not for her, I would not be as successful as I am today. Because of her help, I have not only had the opportunity to become our chapter's president, but also the first district president to come from Franklin County. She has completely transformed the ag program within the three years that she has been at this school. As long as Mrs. Schneider is here, Franklin County FFA will be thriving."

- Shelby Kolb, Student

Chapter Chatter

with some of Indiana's newest chapters

by Leah Jacobs

New FFA programs are truly embracing the current theme of Transform. They are transforming the members, schools and communities they are apart of. Learn a little bit about two chapters below and see how each of them are transforming this year.

La Porte FFA

with Historian, Schasta Antrim

What activities has your chapter been involved with so far?

La Porte FFA has worked diligently to immerse themselves in various FFA activities thus far. One example of this is the chapter's petting zoo. This petting zoo features many baby animals and is visited by both high school students and local preschoolers. The chapter recently conducted their second annual hog roast. Additionally, La Porte harvests both sweetcorn and pumpkin fields.

What do you personally hope to gain from FFA?

Schasta shares, "I personally would like to see how our younger generation can impact the world." She helps with her local ag day where many agriculture related programs collaborate to teach 4th graders about how important agriculture is. She was amazed by students who shared that eggs simply came from the grocery store. She is excited to share her agriculture story and work to educate those around her.

Blackford FFA

with Advisor, Shelbi Louck

What does it mean for your community/school to now have an FFA chapter?

It is something the community has been pushing for a while now. In a very agricultural based community it is definitely exciting to see the school offering a program that meets the needs of the community and may even help create more jobs.

How have you sparked interest in FFA for prospective members that established chapters might be able to use as well?

Ms. Louck notes, let the students know that it is THEIR organization that is truly student run. Students can make it into anything they want it to be. Put them in a role so that they feel powerful and included, but still ensure they know that you are there to fall back on and advise if they need help. There is no other club like that around.

PASS ON THE GIFT
HEIFER® INTERNATIONAL

READ TO FEED

BY SNEHA JOGI

For the second year, the Indiana FFA Association will partner with Heifer International to take on the Read to Feed program. Heifer International is a nonprofit organization that works to compact poverty and hunger through distributing livestock and livestock training to families in need. The Read to Feed program encourages reading while engaging elementary school students in actions that make a difference in the lives of others. Indiana FFA Association's vision is to provide FFA members with the opportunity to impact elementary students and heighten awareness of international agricultural issues as well as help combat poverty. During the 2016 program, over $19,500 were raised for Heifer International, including the matching gift from Elanco. Indiana FFA also appreciates the sponsorship of Cargill for the overall program and chapter awards.

"Read to Feed not only drew attention to two pressing matters that needed support, but it allowed students to use their strengths to create an impact that went far beyond their community. This project enabled FFA members to act as a catalyst of change as they were able to fight the issues of hunger and illiteracy that face our growing population."
- Claire Baney, Hamilton Southeastern

"Heifer International's Read-to-Feed program brought our community together to help others receive the same opportunity that we have. All of our elementary schools willingly agreed to participate in this program. We were very fortunate to have so many supporters of this community service project that allowed us to surpass our goal of raising over $1,000. We hope to do an event like this again in the future."
- Mercedes Brunton, Benton Central

Funny Farm Jokes

A. What kind of pigs know karate?

B. What do you get when you cross a robot and a tractor?

C. What is a sheep's favorite game?

D. Why shouldn't you tell a secret on a farm?

A. Pork Chops B. Transfarmer C. Baa-drunten
D. Because the potatoes have eyes and the corn has ears.

Jack Frost isn't the only winter hazard

Snowmobiling is a fun winter sport enjoyed by more than two million people each year. That rush of speed can be exhilarating, but at 600 pounds with speeds up to 90 miles per hour, snowmobiles are not a toy. Nearly 200 people die annually in snowmobile accidents, and thousands are injured.

It's easy to stay safe, though. Don't go snowmobiling alone and always let others know where you are headed. Stay alert and be aware of possible hazards, including frostbite and wind chill.

Let's all have a fun—and safe—winter season!

70 ANNIVERSARY

Indiana Rural Safety & Health Council
www.farmsafety.org

The Michigan FFA Creed

Winter 2016

Meet Haley from the Harbor Beach FFA Chapter, our Student Spotlight!

Michigan FFA Association

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D Check this Out!
Discover an FFA member who doesn't let her disability define her.

F Say What
Members share their thoughts on sustainable agriculture.

H #Teacher Tuesday
Learn about one of our state's newest FFA advisors and AFNR Educators.

I Living to Serve
Catch up with our Region II State Vice President Aimee Crist.

N Student Spotlight
Hear about a member who constantly sets her sights higher.

O State Officer Stats
Check out what the 2016-2017 officers have in common with you.

STATE EXPECTATIONS

Shatter Expectations BOLDLY

Each and every one of us has certain expectations that surround us in our daily lives. Those who go beyond the expectations set for them are the ones who gain the most out of each opportunity that is presented to them. By going above and beyond we are not only able to find success for ourselves, we are able to influence others and help them grow their own hearts of service. We become influential and memorable, and we can be depended upon to get every job done that is added to our plate, no matter how full it already is.

It's often easy to achieve the expectations set for you, however, those who have made a difference in the world never stopped there. They went far beyond what was expected of them. We all have the opportunity to do the same, to exceed expectations, whether it's by being a positive mentor to a younger student, giving back to our communities in our free time, or placing in the top 10 in the state livestock judging contest.

Michigan FFA, as a part of the greatest youth organization in the nation, we can all go above and beyond, and it is up to each of us to shatter expectations and make a bold difference.

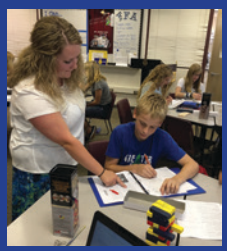
-Maddy Meyer
Region V State Vice President

CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE

Plant Geneticist - improving plants through their genetic code.

Food Product Development - creating new, innovative food products.

Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Educator - educating the next generation of ag students.



The Michigan FFA will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, weight, sexual orientation or disability. Any student requiring an accommodation as a result of a disability should contact the chapter advisor to arrange such accommodation.

Check This Out!

FFA Member Doesn't Let Disability Define Her

By: Bev Berens

Fifteen-year-old Samantha Modreske of Wayland likes to hang out with her FFA friends. She enjoys helping others, and one of her favorite FFA activities is working with the many service projects the Hopkins FFA chapter completes each year. She is working towards the same things most

teenagers are – a driver's license, a satisfying career, a happily ever-after. However, Sam's pathway to reaching her goals may look a little different, might be a little slower, than some 15-year-old freshman.

Sam was born with spina bifida. She walks with the help of braces on both legs and one crutch. She has little feeling from the waist down. Her range of motion is limited; stepping sideways requires whole body movement, balance is tricky, and she walks slower than her classmates. "It's like you or I walking around on stilts all the time," said her step-mom, Laura.

She has the Myelomeningocele (my-low-ma-nin-jo-seal) variety of the birth defect, the most severe form. This type of spina bifida causes moderate to severe disabilities such as kidney and colon issues, loss of feeling in the person's legs and feet, and not being able to move the legs. She had surgery shortly after she was born and another sugery a few years ago to improve other issues brought on by spina bifida

She does not let her disability define her.

She has also broken all the rules of a person born with this birth defect. Many spina bifida peers are wheelchair bound, Sam shows pigs. While she has to be cautious around the hogs, learning to anticipate the hogs' movements has taught her a lot about handling livestock and animal husbandry. Achieving the slow paced walk required in the swine show ring takes months of practice and is done in stages. Laura and her sister McKenna work with Sam's show pigs until they have mastered the gait. Next, Sam

works the hogs into adjusting to her pace and acclimates them to the noise her braces make. "Some hogs are afraid of the noise so it takes longer to train them," she added.

Show pigs are chosen from litters born to the five registered sows she owns with McKenna as part of her SAE. She shows at the Allegan County Fair, the Michigan Livestock Expo, Van Buren Fair, the Green and White Show, Spartan Classic, and several jackpot shows.

One of her most satisfying accomplishments

was winning the Reserve Champion Spot at the 2012 Michigan Livestock Expo with their home-bred animal. “It was great to have a home bred and owned pig win that honor. I am really proud of raising a great pig even if it didn’t make the sale,” Sam said.

When packing the trailer for a show, there are the usual items to take along – bedding, grooming supplies, feed. There is one item the family won’t leave at home: an extra set of leg braces. “It seems like every time we go to a show they would break,” Laura laughs. “One time we literally duct-taped them to her pants to make them work.” Sam has a set for the barn and another set for school. “So I don’t have to wear the ones that smell like the barn when I go to school,” Sam adds.

Sam’s parents have bought and paid for five brace designs to find the right combination that will keep her knees from rotating too far in as she walks. Reducing the torsion on her knees keeps the possibility of knee sugery at bay.

Michigan AgrAbility

Daily pen cleaning requires Sam and McKenna to haul manure to the main farm around the corner. Sam had been using a quad to haul away manure, a dangerous option for someone with balance issues. Michigan AgrAbility stepped in and provided some financial assistance for the Modreske family to outfit a Ranger with hand controls. Now Sam can safely transport waste away once she has cleaned all her pens.

Michigan AgrAbility is a partnership between Michigan State University, USDA, and the Easter Seals organization. AgrAbility’s purpose is to help farmers with disabilities keep doing the work they love. AgrAbility can help any member of a farming family perform normal farm work more easily.

State FFA Convention has been one of Sam’s favorite FFA opportunities thus far. She has competed at state in junior high and greenhand public speaking contests. She also had the opportunity to represent Easter Seals of Michigan as the 2016

ambassador at their annual Walk With Me fundraising events, and her photo and story will be displayed at other Easter Seals events throughout the state this year.

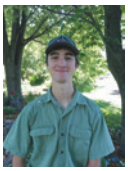
“Sam is hardworking and dedicated. She has a true passion for agriculture and is always excited to be at FFA events, showing up with a smile on her face and a willingness to help others,” said Hopkins FFA Advisor Jessica Couch/

Sam’s advice to others with a disability? “You need to work hard, set goals and not be afraid to sacrifice to achieve them. Don’t let others decide what you can and can’t do. Without the support of my dad, sister, and Laura, I wouldn’t be where I am today. I wouldn’t be confident in public speaking and I wouldn’t believe in myself. Agriculture has just been the playing field where I learned to live life just like the football field is to a football player. But I get to play in the world’s biggest sandbox and my family is bigger than my dad, step mom, and sister. My family is agriculture.” ‡

Say What?

By:
Lauren Heberling
State Reporter

How are producers taking steps toward sustainable agriculture?



Dillon Terpening
Maple Valley

"Producers are taking steps toward sustainable agriculture through improved genetics and management practices. In terms of genetics I am seeing an increase in high-producing cattle that preform better on less feed. As far as management, I see many producers turning to low impact practices like no-till planting and using more efficient technology."

Colten Aikens
Dundee

"Sustainable agriculture has been on the rise for a while and there are a handful of reasons why. I'd have to say the most important being genetically modified crops and irrigation systems. These can both help the industry when a species of weed is flourishing in an area or when there is a lack of rainfall."

Allison Romzek
Ubly

"Producers are taking steps toward sustainable agriculture by using more environmentally friendly practices. They are incorporating safer practices for the producer and the consumer. Newer technologies are also allowing producers copious amounts of goods from less land."

"Producers are taking steps to create more wholesome products while using less resources. Our population is growing, and we have to keep the earth healthy, while still getting the resources we need to sustain life. We came up with more and more technology to get more products with less toll or demand from the area the farming is being done on."

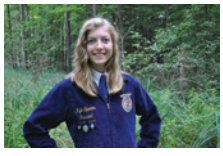
Jessie Nash
Ovid-Elsie

"Some producers are taking steps toward sustainability by getting more yield out of each animal or harvest. Whether it is through breeding or technology, producers are trying to make sure that a virus isn't going to wipe out their work."

Joseph Sieradzki
Cass City

It is important to be aware of sustainable ag in the dairy industry. I get to be a part of herd health checks. Every two weeks, a vet comes and determines if a cow is pregnant, or is able to be bred. Open cows may be a waste of money and resources. Finding a way to have less open cows means more cows calving and increasing the potential to produce milk."

Kylie Sperow
Ogemaw Heights



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

Adam Gaulke
Allegan Area Tech Center FFA

"Producers can continue to plant more crops to improve the habitat and provide cover for wildlife. Conservation can be simple if everyone helps and pitches in some way."

Jacob Goetz
Blissfield FFA

"The first critical step is education. It is essential for producers to be aware of conservation methods. The final step is action , which involves cooperation between state officials, producers, communities, and the agricultural industry."

Baylee Drown
Cedar Springs FFA

"I think there are two parts of conservation, prevention and treatment. Prevention encourages practices like using non-hazardous pesticides. Treatment can be as simple as rotating crops. Everyone can be a part of conservation."

Hannah Chisholm
Standish Sterling FFA

"Producers can use technology to control erosion. They can also try to not use products that can potentially poison the soil, water, and other resources.

#Teacher Tuesday - Miss Casie Forbush

By: Lauren Heberling
State Reporter

Even though this is her first official year as an agricultural education teacher, for Corunna advisor Casie Forbush, teaching ag is nothing new. Casie grew up involved in FFA as a member in Corunna, where her father was the advisor. She had always known she wanted to become a teacher because of her passion for working with kids, but it was confirmed her sophomore year at Michigan State University that agricultural education was absolutely the right path for her. Being a first-year teacher can be summed up in one word for Casie: "Busy. I've always watched how busy my dad was for FFA events, but you never truly realize how much time is spent planning, preparing and grading until you do it." However, for Casie, all the hard works pays off: "I am a 'Lifelong Learner', constantly learning and improving. This year, it has been so cool to go from Casie Forbush to Miss Forbush, establishing myself as an ag advisor; making my own mark." The transition period from member to advisor has been challenging, but it has been made easier from both the overwhelming support of the school and the community for the Corunna FFA chapter, as well as the support and guidance of other ag teachers, including Corunna's other advisor, Brian Kiesling. With all this support and encouragement standing behind them, Casie is excited to see "what the chapter can accomplish next." ‡

Quick Facts

FFA Chapter:

Corunna

Years Teaching:

1

College Attended:

Michigan State University

Most Memorable FFA Experience:

Washington Leadership Conference (WLC)

Favorite part of being an Ag Teacher:

"Watching kids grow and accomplish things they never thought were possible. Being able to start with 8th grade students and see them transform and succeed throughout their high school years is amazing. That's a cool and unique aspect about being an ag teacher."

Q: Why would you recommend students consider agriculture as a career path?
A: "I always go back to the basic, 'I farm- you eat' concept. People will always need food so there will always be a demand for people in the agricultural industry. And there are so many more careers than just farming: there's everything from research to packaging, and it's my job to show students that."

Q: What are the biggest things students can gain out of being an FFA member?
A: "There are three big things students can gain out of FFA. One of the biggest is self-confidence. Also learning how to work with others. Lastly, they acquire real life skills: instead of just reading about something in a book, students get to go out and learn things in a more hands-on way."

Q: What is one of the most rewarding parts of being an ag teacher?
A: "It's fun to work with students who know what FFA is, but I absolutely love seeing students come in not exactly knowing what FFA is and then see that light in their eyes when it clicks; when they realize all that they can gain from FFA. My advice for all ag students is to meet new people and push yourself to grow; that is where the most learning happens."

Living to Serve

By:
Aimee Crist
Region II State Vice Presidient

The FFA Mission Statement asserts that "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." There are many ways to embrace our mission statement and take advantage of our short time to live to serve. As state officers, we hope to help you shatter your expectations and get the most out of your FFA experience.

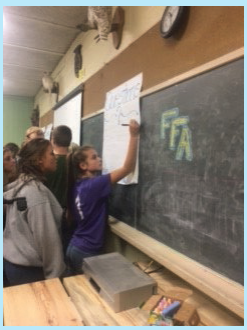
To help us as members live out this statement, FFA promotes cooperation among all people, builds character and promotes citizenship, volunteerism, and patriotism, and finally develops interpersonal skills in teamwork, communication, human relations, and social interaction. This year, we have been instilling these concepts to members across the state, through our chapter visits, fall leadership conference, and travels to National Convention!

September marks the beginning of Chapter Breakouts, and they last until the beginning of December. Traveling pairs embark on their way to visit chapters from around the state and present workshops. The sole purpose of these workshops is to help the members of our association grow themselves individually while coming together as a chapter. Through these workshops, we hope to allow each member to develop interpersonal skills in teamwork, communication, human relations, and social interaction. It is incredible visiting chapters, seeing outstanding programs, and meeting diverse members!

Another opportunity for growth was the Fall Leadership Conference. This conference may only be two days long, but is packed with information and lessons that will last a lifetime. Through the 212 and 360 workshops, members had the opportunity to learn many valuable lessons that not only helped achieve personal growth, but also helped us learn to cooperate and develop others in the process. Conferences like this allowed us to meet members that have similar backgrounds or interests, but also encouraged us to mingle with other members from across our great state.

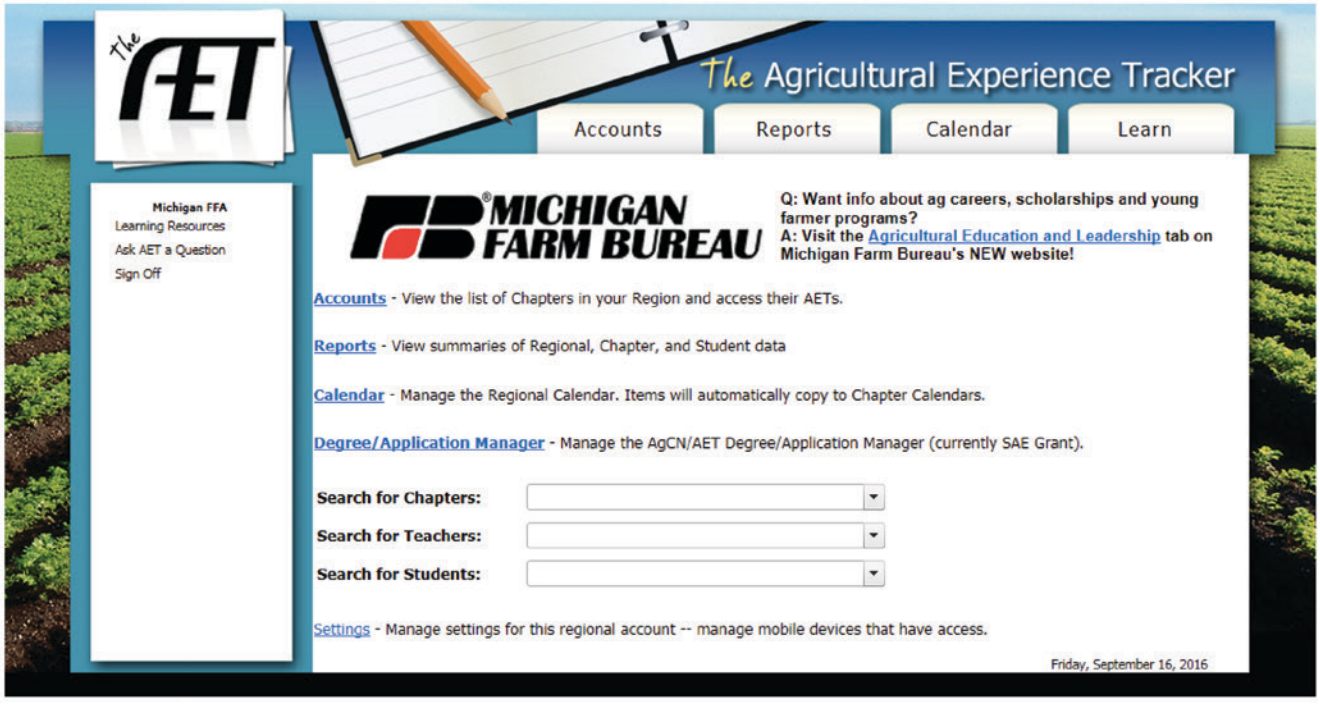
Finally, the one event that members look forward to from their greenhand year - National Convention & Expo! In late October, the streets of Indianapolis were filled with our blue jackets as we came together as a nationwide organization to celebrate, compete, volunteer, and embrace the impact of the FFA. Walking around the streets of Indy, we experienced a newfound pride in our blue jackets and met other members from across the nation. The events and opportunities at national convention were endless, from building character to promoting citizenship, volunteerism, and patriotism. One opportunity we were able to experience at convention was the National Day of Service. Members came together to work as one and improve a local area. Being surrounded by other members who share our passions was truly a life-changing experience.

I hope that you take every chance available to you through our amazing organization and live to serve other members, your chapter, and community. These are only a few of the events that give us all the tools needed to become a servant leader. ‡



AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCE TRACKER:

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?



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TESTIMONIALS
HEAR WHAT YOUR PEERS HAVE TO SAY

Visiting with any successful farmer, one would learn that the most critical component is their records. Knowing what has been ordered, what is being grown or raised, what has been harvested, and obviously, the bottom line. Michigan Farm Bureau and the Foundation for Agriculture see the value in quality record keeping and believes this skill should be taught at a young age. For this reason, MFB and the Foundation for Agriculture have chosen to sponsor the Agricultural Experience Tracker (AET) for the past four years, providing a function for FFA members to record, maintain, and strengthen their record keeping skills and Supervised Agricultural Experiences.

Other benefits of AET include populating numerous applications, including scholarships, proficiency awards, and the Michigan and American FFA Degrees. Michigan Farm Bureau urges FFA members to take full advantage of this opportunity and use the values and skills taught through the Agricultural Experience Tracker in their future careers.

TY FINEGAN

Jackson Area Career Center FFA | SAE: Diversified Livestock Production

"The AET program is very important to students who need to keep track of their Supervised Agricultural Experience. Students can fill out proficiency awards based on their SAE and win awards at State Convention. It has been very helpful to me because it helps me keep good records of what I have done, and it gives me the chance to win awards for doing something that I enjoy doing."

ACHSAH BUTCHART

Newago County Career-Tech Center FFA | SAE: Beef Production

"The AET website has helped me with my SAE because it has made it a simpler process to track my SAE in beef production. Because I own a herd of purebred polled Herefords, the AET website has made it easier for me to track the money and time investment in my project."

TAMMY KESSEL

North Huron FFA | SAE: Diversified Livestock Production

"The Agricultural Experience Tracker has helped me keep accurate records of the many different animal species that I raise. I began using AET during my freshman year by simply recording my five cows. I then started using it to also record information for my sow, laying hens, rabbits, market hogs, steers and broiler chickens. It has helped keep my records straight, and I can also record FFA stuff such as officer positions held. Using the AET has made filling out applications much easier."

CAITLIN LUCK

Sand Creek FFA | SAE: Diversified Livestock Production Entrepreneurship and Forest Management Entrepreneurship

"The AET has greatly improved my organizational skills when it comes to entering information for various tasks. It has made the entire SAE and application process a lot easier and more efficient."

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

Haley Talaski
Harbor Beach FFA

By:
Lauren Heberling
State Reporter

Quick Facts

Grade:
12th

FFA Chapter:
Harbor Beach

SAE's:
-Florticulture
-Beef Production

Current Office:
North Huron
President

Favorite Quote:
"A bad day for your ego, is a good day for your soul."

Biggest Accomplishments:
-National Semi-Finalist Ag Issue Team
-State Alternate Extemp Public Speaker
-Second Place Individual Agricultural Communications

Haley Talaski is currently a senior at Harbor Beach High School, serving as the Harbor Beach FFA President this year. Since the beginning of her freshman year, Haley's older sister, who is the advisor for the Bad Axe FFA Chapter, has been pushing her to join. "I wasn't sure I wanted to, but I decided to join at second semester and I fell in love with FFA."

Haley has continued to excel within her chapter and this year being her fourth year in FFA, she has high goals set for both herself and her chapter. Currently, she is employed at her mother's flower shop in Harbor Beach. This, along with her continued learning and passion, has developed into her S.A.E. of floriculture. Additionally, Haley shows goats and steers at the local 4-H fair, leading into her other S.A.E., beef production.

In the past, Haley has competed in Job Interview, Creed Speaking, Agricultural Communications, and the Floriculture contest. This year, however, being her last year, she wants to compete in Job Interview at the state level. At State Convention next year, Haley also hopes to be running for State Office. After high school, she wants to further her passion for agriculture by attending Michigan State University. "Agricultural Education or Agribusiness is what I have it narrowed down to. I just know for certain whatever I decide, I want it to be in the ag field." Haley's ultimate career goal is to own her own horse ranch.

Ask Haley what her biggest accomplishment is and she'll be sure to respond, "being able to serve my chapter as President not only this year, but last year as well." In addition to her involvement in FFA, she also serves as the reporter for her D.E.C.A. chapter and is in NHS and 4-H. Being where she is today would not have been possible without her biggest role model, Victoria Yackle. "She's my big sister," Haley said, "she has always, always been there for me." ‡

Q: From FFA member to FFA member, why would you suggest going into an agricultural career?
A: "Agriculture is a huge industry to go into. But the outcome is even bigger. I would say agriculture opens doors for everyone. You don't have to be a farmer necessarily to be part of agriculture. There is also business, communication, and much more. Being in agriculture is something you have to be very dedicated to and have a passion for. Most agriculturalists have this and that is the reason agriculture continues to grow."

Q: What is your advice to any incoming FFA/agricultural education students?
A: "Step out of your comfort zone and don't be afraid to try new things. High school flies by, so enjoy every minute you have!"

State Officer Stats

Loren King
State President

Chapter: Branch Area Career Center

College: Michigan State University

SAE: Emerging Agricultural Technology

Theme Song: “Good to be Alive”

Favorites

Sport: Running

Movie: *The Lego Movie*

Hobby: Reading and Cooking

Candy: Reese’s Pieces

Josephine Forbush
Region I State Vice President

Chapter: Byron

College: Michigan State University

SAE: Swine and Sheep Production

Theme Song: “The River”

Favorites

Sport: Cross Country

T.V. Show: *Scorpion*

Musician: Garth Brooks

Book: *A Walk to Remember*

Courtney Wangler
Region VI State Vice President

Chapter: Ogemaw Heights

College: Saginaw Valley State University

SAE: Dairy Management

Hobby: Horseback Riding

Favorites

Sport: Equestrian

Candy: Airheads

T.V. Show: *Big Bang Theory*

Musician: Evanescence

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MISSOURI FFA TODAY
Winter 2016

Charting Their Course

SAEs help members set sights on the future

DOING TO LEARN

BY JOANN PIPKIN

Even in elementary school, Cole Diggins had a fondness for science. He recalls participating in fifth grade in his first science fair with a solar powered toy car.

But it wasn't until he became a member of FFA that his interest in the subject really blossomed. Through his agriscience Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE), Diggins was able to study the impact of hedge apples on insects. It was a project that earned him the State Star in Agriscience award at the 2016 Missouri FFA Convention. And it's one that is helping shape the Bronaugh FFA member's future.

"(My FFA experience) has really set up my career path with my love for biochemistry and agriculture in general," Diggins explains.

Diggins built his entire SAE around agriscience research on uses for the hedge apple. Through the research project, he identified the hedge apple as a natural, sustainable, pollinator-friendly insect

CONTINUED ON PAGE F

Bronaugh FFA member Cole Diggins built his Supervised Agricultural Experience project around agriscience research for the hedge apple. Diggins is the 2016 Missouri Star in Agriscience.

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THE PRESIDENT'S POST

Decide to Try

2016-17 State FFA Officers

Area	Officer
1	Jacqueline Janorschke-Sec. De Kalb
2	Logan Korff Norborne
3	Natalie Ayers Green City
4	Baileigh Horstmeier-1st V.P. Fulton
5	Nick Banze Warrenton
6	Emily Lock Carrollton
7	Hunter Lovewell Sherwood
8	Katherine Imhoff California
9	Jessica Hylton Miller
10	Ashley Spear Halfway
11	Colton Spencer-President Aurora
12	Jessie Peterson Branson
13	Heidi Murry Plato
14	Macey Hurst Fatima
15	Hunter Kay Fredericktown
16	Moriah McLard Richland (Essex)
	Adam Kirby - Past Pres. Trenton

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 COLTON SPENCER
STATE FFA PRESIDENT

The motivation to succeed comes from within. Our drive to improve our skills and accomplish our goals has to come from somewhere. A favorite quote of mine is one from Gail Devers, "Every accomplishment starts with the decision to try." In our busy lives we must take the time to try new things and challenge ourselves to constantly improve.

Last summer, I ran into several students at FFA Camp that put this quote into action. I clearly remember as it was truly a motivating experience. I was preparing for our student-led look-ahead program at FFA camp in which members can volunteer to give a speech the following night. Helping some members prepare their speech outlines, I could tell how nervous they were after standing in front of them for several moments. I reminded them they were among the select few brave enough to take on this fear.

As we concluded our preparation, I remember one particular member making a few more comments. He mentioned how scared he was to give a speech or even talk in front of people. Then, he said something with excitement that will stick with me forever, "But I am at FFA camp; I am here to step outside my comfort zone so why not give a speech!" He made that decision

to try, and the following night he worked to overcome his fear of speaking.

This is just one particular example of the many in the group of speakers I was fortunate enough to help. The next day was an inspirational experience as I was able to watch 10 students work to combat their fears and encourage their fellow FFA members to do the same. We must commit to that decision of trying in order to work toward our accomplishments. We must constantly work to build our success stories through the opportunities presented to us.

As FFA members these opportunities are almost unlimited, but day in and day out we must challenge ourselves to work hard. If we work hard and are determined in our everyday lives, then the sky is truly the limit in terms of the impact we can make on our society. I hope you find the chance to reach out this year, find a passion and make a difference in your FFA chapters.

State Officer Q&A

Who's that underneath the blue corduroy?

EMILY LOCK

State Vice President, Area 6

FFA Chapter: Carrollton ACC
Hometown: Carrollton

College/Major: Biochemistry and Athletic Training

SAE: Diversified horticulture and Agriscience research.

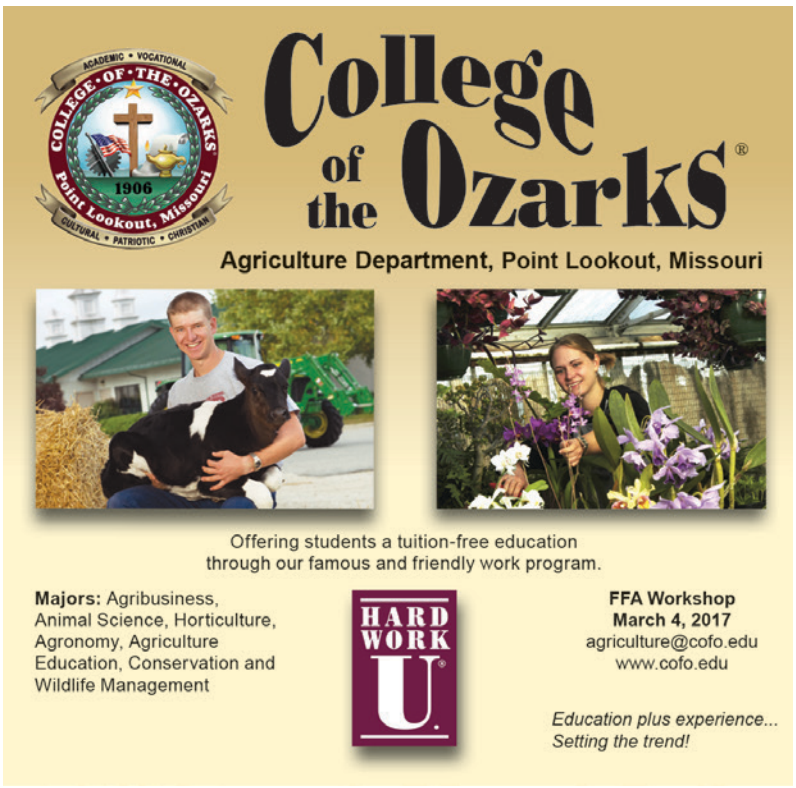
Why did you want to become a Missouri FFA Officer? I was always so inspired by past state and national officers that I wanted serve as an officer just as they had. My FFA Advisors were also big part of why I wanted to become a state officer. They always pushed me to go above and beyond.

Who is your hero and why? My mom is my biggest hero, she raised me as a single parent and has as encouraged me to follow my dreams. She always told me I could do whatever I wanted; I just had to work hard to get there.

What are your plans for the future? I plan to attend the University of Missouri majoring in biochemistry and athletic training. In the future, I would love to be an athletic trainer for a division 1 college football team and then possibly go on to medical school.

What is something unique or interesting that few people know about you? I am trained in opera and classical music.

Advice to FFA Members: You can do whatever you set your mind to if you put in a lot of hard work and dedication. Don't ever feel like you're not good enough or not qualified enough; it's not about getting first in every CDE or speaking event. Your drive and passion for this great organization that can take you far.



State Officer Q&A

Who's that underneath the blue corduroy?

NATALIE AYRES
State Vice President, Area 3

Hometown: Green City

College/Major: University of Missouri/ Science and Agricultural Journalism

SAE: My Supervised Agricultural Experience program consists of raising and selling approximately 300 hardy garden mums in the Green City R-1 Greenhouse. In addition, I own a beef cattle enterprise and show horses and market hogs during the summer. I also work placement hours for my family-owned beef cattle operation.

Why did you want to become a Missouri FFA Officer? Having the opportunity to serve as a Missouri State FFA Officer has been a goal of mine since I was very young. As the daughter of two FFA advisors, I have been around this organization my entire life. I used to joke with people about how I was literally born to wear blue corduroy. I had always known I wanted to run for office, but it was not really until the fall of my senior year when I figured out why. That was when I met National FFA Western Region Vice President Caleb Gustin. His ability to motivate members across the nation and help them find their own ways to shine greatness inspired me to want to do the same. I love interacting with people, and I want to be able to help Missouri FFA members discover their inner potentials and take advantage of all the opportunities FFA has to offer.

What is something unique or interesting that few people know about you? Something unique about me is I have a twin brother named Zachary. We are very competitive with each other, to the point we purposely buy different breeds of market hogs just so we do not have to show against each other. He also enjoys picking on me, so I like to remind him I am Twin A by 12 minutes.

What are your plans for the future? My future plans include earning a bachelor of science degree in science and agricultural journalism at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Following college graduation, I will seek employment with a commodity organization or agricultural public relations firm. I also hope to achieve one of my personal goals and someday become the Missouri State Fair queen.

State Officer Q&A

Who's that underneath the blue corduroy?

HUNTER LOVEWELL
State Vice President, Area 7

FFA Chapter: Sherwood FFA

Hometown: Creighton

College/Major: College of the Ozarks, Ag Education

SAE: Beef Cattle Production-Placement

Why did you want to become a Missouri FFA Officer? I wanted to give back to the Missouri FFA for all that it has given me. I want to make a difference in the lives of Missouri FFA members.

Who is your hero and why? My hero is my dad. He has taught me to always work hard and never give up. My dad has helped me develop the strong work ethic that I have today. I would not be where I am today by not working hard.

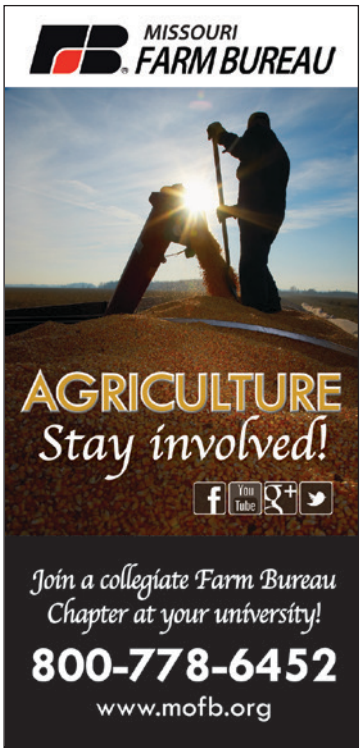
What are you plans for the future? In the future, I plan to become a high school agriculture education teacher and FFA advisor. I would also like to expand my registered Beefmaster cattle herd to eventually sell registered bulls and seedstock.

What is something unique and interesting that few people know about you? One of my favorite things to do in my free time is to drive the gravel roads listening to 70s and 80s country music.

Advice to FFA Members: Respect and listen to everyone who is around you, but never let anyone tell you what to do with your life.

SCAN ME

Get the latest on what's happening with Missouri FFA!



Charting Their Course

Continued from Page A

repellant. He then turned the findings into an online store, Hedge Apple Ranch, where he sells hedge apples and promotes his research to customers.

One of three key components to agricultural education programs, SAEs introduce students to careers and occupations; develop their occupational skills and help apply academics in a workplace environment. Simply put, SAEs open doors for FFA members to explore their interests and chart their course for the future.

Despite the busy schedule her placement SAE encompassed, East Buchanan FFA member Bridget Merrigan says the knowledge and skills she's taken away from her project are far more valuable than the time she put in to attain them.

"Throughout my SAE, I was required to do many different, diverse tasks, allowing me to obtain new skills and knowledge," Merrigan says.

In her placement SAE, Merrigan worked for Bunker Farms, a cattle and row crop operation. In her position, she was responsible for the 2,900-head crossbred cattle operation including daily herd checks, feeding, treating sick animals and maintaining facilities. Although she enhanced her cattle industry knowledge, she also gained extensive experience in row crop farming.

"I now know how to drill and plant soybeans and corn, as well as run a swather and combine," she explains. "I will take away from my SAE many skills and an abundant amount of knowledge that I will use for the rest of my life."

The 2016 Missouri FFA Star in Placement Award winner, Merrigan's SAE exposed her to how unique each experience can be in FFA. While she performed a number of basic farm tasks through her SAE, the opportunity was once in a lifetime as she learned the activities all in one setting.

"The experiences I have encountered throughout my SAE and FFA are essential to a successful future," Merrigan says. "The simple skills that aren't even related to agriculture serve a big part in my success."

Overcoming her fear of public speaking and resolving conflicts are two skills in particular Merrigan says will benefit her future career.

Eldon FFA member Hayden Otto spent years shadowing his father and grandfather. His father owns a tractor dealership while his grandfather spent five decades as an implement mechanic. When he

Bridget Merrigan's placement Supervised Agricultural Experience involved working on a cattle and row crop farm. The experience helped the East Buchanan FFA member earn the State Star in Placement award.

Eldon FFA member Hayden Otto turned tractor restoration into his agribusiness Supervised Agricultural Experience. He says the record keeping and management skills he developed will benefit him in the future as he studies farm and ranch management in college.

joined FFA, Otto was able to build his SAE around the fondness he had developed for restoring old tractors. He combined that with a beef cattle enterprise, and the two experiences have helped the young college student lay a foundation for the future.

Studying farm and ranch management at Fort Scott Community College in Kansas, Otto says his SAE sharpened his record keeping and management skills, and helped him become better organized. Through his SAE, Otto earned the 2016 State Star in Agribusiness award.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Charting Their Course

Continued from Page G

SUPERVISED AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS

OWNERSHIP/ ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Students with an ownership or entrepreneurship SAE own the enterprise, equipment and supplies. All products or services must be agriculturally related. Raising and selling animals or crops, buying and reselling feed, seed or fertilizer, owning a pet care business or a business that programs and installs computer equipment in tractors are examples.

PLACEMENT/INTERNSHIP

Placement or internship programs involve the placement of students in agriculture, food or natural resources-related businesses to provide a "learning by doing" environment. These experiences may be paid or unpaid. Examples include working on a farm or ranch, in a farm supply store or a food testing laboratory or in an agriculturally-related nonprofit organization.

RESEARCH

In a research SAE students plan and conduct major agricultural experiments using the scientific process and discover new knowlege. Research SAEs can be entrepreneurial or placement. Examples are research on the most efficient feed supplements for livestock or the best fertilization methods in plants.

EXPLORATORY

The exploratory SAE is usually beginner level, short term and designed primarily to help students become literate in agriculture or become acquainted with possible careers in agriculture, food and natural resources. This type of SAE should help students create a larger, more focused SAE

SCHOOL-BASED ENTERPRISE

A school-based enterprise SAE is student-managed, can be entrepreneurial or placement and takes place in a school setting outside of regularly scheduled class time. The project needs to provide goods or services that meet the needs of an identified market and should replicate the workplace environment. An example might be cooperative livestock raising in a school facility or managing or working in a school garden, land lab or a greenhouse.

SERVICE-LEARNING

Service-learning is a student-managed service activity where students are involved in the development of a needs assessment, planning the goals, objectives and budget of an activity, promotion and evaluation of a project. A project must be stand-alone and not part of an ongoing chapter project or community fundraiser.

Source: National FFA Organization

"When I first joined FFA, I had no idea what the agriculture industry encompassed," Otto says. "Agriculture truly puts food on the table."

Building a diverse ownership SAE proved to be the passion for Meadville FFA member Joel Martin. As the 2016 State Star Farmer, Martin's SAE features both swine and beef cattle enterprises.

In the 2012 drought, Martin's uncle sent him 20 cows with a share agreement on the calves produced. That opportunity helped him not only expand his SAE, but also learn valuable life skills.

"That was really my first opportunity to take ownership in a big group of livestock and to be in charge of daily care, management and nutrition," Martin says.

His experience in raising show hogs afforded him the opportunity to see how genetics and nutrition work in the exhibition side of the livestock industry.

"When you can apply what you learned in the classroom to an enterprise at home, that's huge," Martin says.

At the end of the day, Martin credits his FFA experience with helping him find his passion for the future. With his sights set on returning to production agriculture and becoming a beef industry leader, Martin says FFA is all about taking experiences and learning from them regardless of whether you

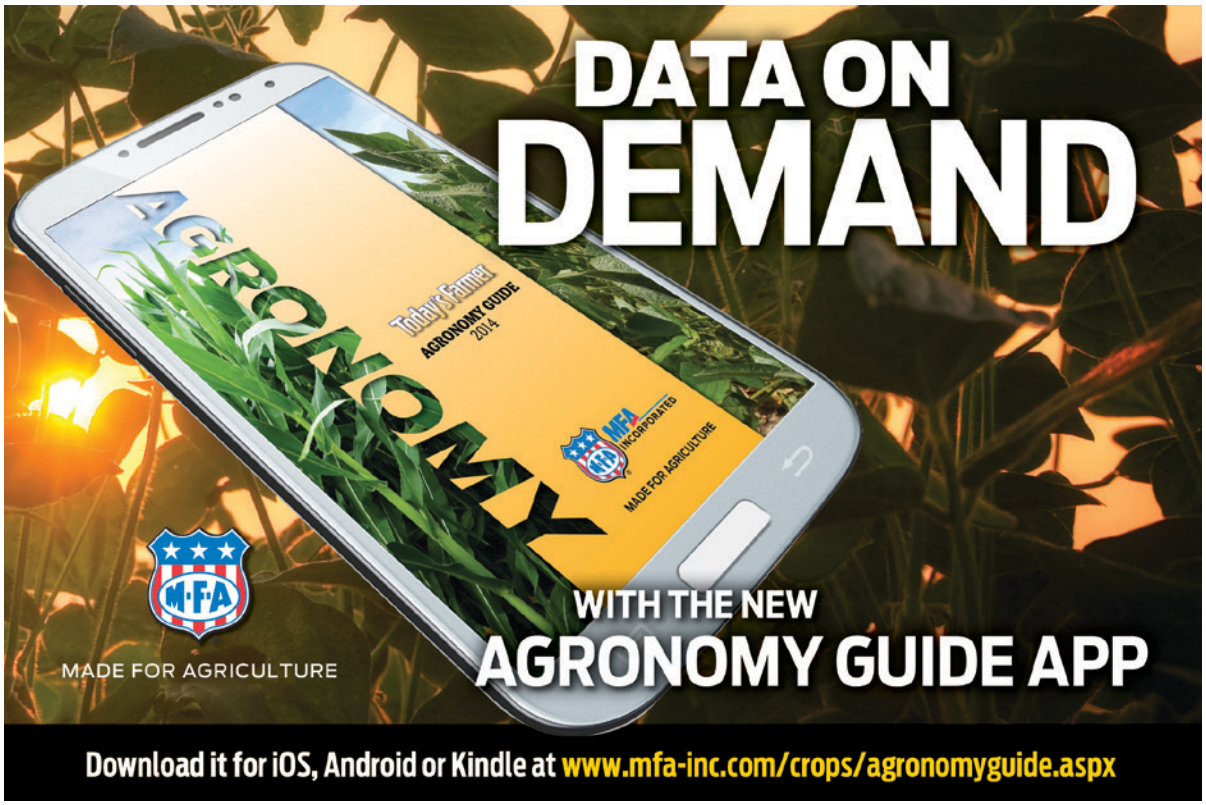
Meadville FFA member Joel Martin hopes to turn his Supervised Agricultural Experience into a career in production agriculture. He wants to someday be a leader in the beef industry.

are competing in a speech, a career development event or working with your SAE.

"Agriculture is full of challenges, but with challenge comes opportunity," he explains. "When we face challenges, we have to find opportunity in that moment and make the most it."

For FFA members, Martin says building an SAE might mean you have to step out of your comfort zone and start something new.

"You might find something new that you really enjoy and find a future in it," he says.



In Their Words

Up close with your Missouri State FFA Officers

MACEY HURST

State Vice President, Area 14

Blue and gold. These two colors and all they represent have helped shape my life. My high school colors were blue and gold, as were the colors of the parochial school I attended beforehand. They were used as identifiers in my area as there were several closely located high schools. Even so, the colors blue and gold meant little to me. That was until I came to know them as National Blue and Corn Gold.

Blue and gold. These two colors were adopted as the official colors of the then Future Farmers of America in 1929, the same year Missouri FFA was established. Only a year old at the time, the colors were adopted at a time when only white males were allowed membership into the FFA. The blue became National Blue as a representative of the blue of our nation's flag. The gold became Corn Gold as an obvious comparison to the golden rows of corn, a staple in agriculture and important factor in the establishment of our country. Many things have changed since 1929, and many things are changing still today within our organization and our world.

Blue and gold. These two colors are undoubtedly important to all of those involved in FFA. Staying "Forever Blue" and always having "Gold Standards" are two things on which we as members have always prided ourselves. As members and as an organization, we have done an incredible job of maintaining a reputation that our founders and earliest members established for us. We have built a reputation of being an organization filled with members containing qualities of persistence, work ethic, morals, humility, passion, patriotism and pride. It is incredible what members achieve when they take these skills and characteristics learned through their time in blue corduroy and use them toward reaching the gold. Writers, musicians, actors, governors and even a United States president have been products of the FFA. Furthermore, those who inspire us daily — parents, grandparents, teachers and mentors — use these same attributes to accomplish their incredibly important jobs.

Blue and gold. These two colors, while just a small part of such a great organization, can guide us on our path to achieving greatness. I believe that like many before us, if we take advantage of all the opportunities, lessons and advice offered us during our time in the blue, we will reach the gold. It is in our tradition to do so. Blue and gold are the foundation of our organization and have helped us achieve much. Still today, the National FFA Organization incorporates National Blue and Corn Gold in its vision for the future. That said, it is also important to notice the changes around us, within our organization and world. As former FFA member and United States President Jimmy Carter once said, "We must adjust to changing times and still hold to unchanging principles." Even then it was clear that it was important to honor from where we came. Likewise, we must also envision where we are going. That's why we as FFA members will always embrace change and respect tradition.

JESSIE PETERSON

I was raised in a large family and grew up hearing about FFA, but I never really knew what my brother and cousins were talking about. When I was finally old enough to enter high school, I decided to join the organization.

As time went on, I quickly figured out what it truly meant to be an FFA member, but I learned what it meant to be a Greenhand even faster. When I was first told that I would have to learn the FFA Creed, I was terrified. How was I supposed to stand in front of my class and give a speech?

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

JESSIE PETERSON
State Vice President, Area 12

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

I soon learned one way to accomplish the task at hand was for me to start practicing. I spent a lot of time standing in front of the mirror in my room or reciting the Creed to my parents whenever I got the chance. I was determined to say the Creed in front of my class — and to say it perfectly.

When the big day finally came, I woke up excited. I was finally going to deliver the speech that I had been working so hard on for weeks. As I arrived at school I began to get nervous. My hands were sweating; my face was red. Even though I was once again terrified, I was still determined to deliver the Creed to my class, after all it was only a few paragraphs.

That day I was able to recite the Creed to my whole class, and a couple of days later I got the news that I was chosen to represent our chapter in the Area 12 Creed Speaking Contest. As a result of being willing to practice and remaining dedicated I was able to push myself to be not only a better speaker, but also a better leader.

As FFA members, opportunities to further our leadership skills are numerous, but we still have to choose to take advantage of those opportunities. I encourage all Missouri FFA members to put your skills to the test and break through your limits. Who knows, maybe one day you'll be chosen as your chapter's Creed speaker just like I was.

In Their Words

Up close with your Missouri State FFA Officers

BAILEIGH HORSTMEIER

State Vice President, Area 4

Nelson Mandela once said, "It always seems impossible until it's done." I truly believe these words he shared hit the nail on the head. Whenever I find something I want to accomplish, I get excited, and then I start thinking about how I am going to accomplish it. Then, the one thing that usually comes to my mind is, "I can't do that; it's impossible." Whether because I am my own worst critic or because reaching that goal would mean getting out of my comfort zone, I always seem to find the obstacle that will make accomplishing my goals impossible. Usually, that obstacle is myself.

Until last year, I had never participated in Prepared Public Speaking in the FFA. I wanted to try it, but I have always held myself back, thinking I wouldn't be any good and that it was an impossible task for me to accomplish. Contest season was just around the corner. My advisor was new, but she could read me like a book. She told me that I would be writing a speech and competing in Advanced Public Speaking, and that she would be there every step of the way. I began to think of all the reasons why I would not be able to accomplish this. I thought to myself, "I have never done Prepared Public Speaking and now I am supposed to speak in the hardest division there is! This is going to be impossible."

I was my own obstacle, and if it wouldn't have been for my advisor helping me revise my speech, practice giving it, and getting me out of my comfort zone, I would not have placed first in the Area 4 Advanced Public Speaking contest. By helping me, my advisor made me realize that I can do anything I work toward — even if that might seem impossible. If you allow yourself to silence that inner you and get out of your comfort zone, anything is possible.

FFA members, sometimes we are our own obstacles. It's okay to step out of our comfort zones and allow others to show us that we can do whatever we set our minds to. We must believe in ourselves and know that we are capable of anything. Like Nelson Mandela said, "It always seems impossible until it's done."

How are you going to accomplish the impossible?

Missouri Agribusiness Academy Set

Applications due Feb. 1

LEARN ABOUT AG CAREERS

The Missouri Department of Agriculture is giving 30 high school students representing 4-H clubs and FFA chapters, as well as farm families, throughout Missouri the opportunity to explore careers in agriculture through the 2017 Missouri Agribusiness Academy – a competitive program for sophomores interested in pursuing agriculture-related college degrees and careers.

The 2017 Missouri Agribusiness Academy will be held June 5-9, and marks the program's 30th year. Students may apply to participate through Feb. 1, 2017.

In 2017, the students selected have the opportunity to learn about the many unique opportunities for careers in the Kansas City region.

Since 1988, the Missouri Agribusiness Academy has awarded more than 800 academy memberships through a competitive application and interview process. Applications for students interested in becoming part of the 2016 class are available online at agriculture.mo.gov.

Missouri Agribusiness Academy (MAbA) members visit Springfield-based Paul Mueller Company during last year's event. The application deadline for the 2017 MAbA is Feb. 1.

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JOHN DEERE | SYDENSTRICKER

FFA Calendar

Missouri FFA is on the move

DECEMBER

2-3 Missouri Livestock Symposium
Kirksville

4 Missouri Farm Bureau FFA Speaking Finals
Tan-Tar-A, Osage Beach

4 Missouri Sheep Producers Speaking Finals
Tan-Tar-A, Osage Beach

4-6 Missouri Farm Bureau Annual Meeting
Tan-Tar-A, Lake of the Ozarks

15 Youth Pork Ambassador Applications Due

15 Univ. of Missouri Scholarship Applications Due for In-coming Freshman

14-16 Governor's Conference on Agriculture
Tan-Tar-A, Lake of the Ozarks

JANUARY

GREENHAND MOTIVATIONAL CONFERENCES

Area 1 8:30 a.m., Jan. 6—MWSU, St. Joseph

Area 2 8 a.m., Jan. 5—NCMC, Trenton

Area 2 11:30 a.m., Jan. 5—NCMC, Trenton

Area 3 9:30 a.m., Jan. 4—TSU, Kirksville

Area 4 9 a.m., Jan. 3—MU, Columbia

Area 5 4 p.m., Jan. 3—Bowling Green

Area 6 9 a.m., Jan. 3—SFCC, Sedalia

Area 7 12:30 p.m.., Jan. 3—SFCC, Sedalia

Area 8 8:30 a.m., Jan. 3—LU, Jefferson City

Area 9 9 a.m., Jan. 4—MSU, Springfield

Area 10 9 a.m., Jan. 5—MSU, Springfield

Area 11 12 p.m., Jan. 4—MSU, Springfield

Area 12 12 p.m., Jan. 5—MSU, Springfield

Area 13 2:00 p.m., Jan. 3—Waynesville

Area 13 8:30 a.m., Jan. 4—MSU, West Plains

Area 14 4:00 p.m., Jan. 5—Sullivan

Area 15 8:30 a.m., Jan. 5—SEMO, Cape Girardeau

Area 16 2:30 p.m., Jan. 4—TRCC, Poplar Bluff

JANUARY

6-8 Missouri Beef Industry Convention & Trade Show
Tan-Tar-A, Osage Beach

7 Public Speaking Institute
Litton Ag Campus, Chillicothe

14 Public Speaking Institute
MU Bradford Farm, Columbia

20-21 Ag Expo—Three Rivers Community College
Poplar Bluff

FEBRUARY

1 Missouri Agribusiness Academy Applications Due

1 Missouri State Fair Youth in Ag Scholarship Applications Due

1 National FFA Scholarship Online Scholarship Applications Close

3-4 Mo. Young Farmer/Young Farm Wives Annual Convention
Columbia

4 Mo. YF/YFW FFA Speaking Contest
Columbia

7 Mo. Pork Association Public Speaking Finals
Holiday Inn Exec. Center, Columbia

26 Registration Deadline Mo. Youth Livestock Grading & Judging Contest

24-26 Western Farm Show
Kansas City

18-25 National FFA Week

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AG INDUSTRY RESOURCES · *MISSOURI FFA TODAY* ONLINE

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GRANT

The Shaping Rural Missouri grant program offered by FCS Financial provides local 4-H and FFA organizations grants to implement projects that will benefit their rural communities. Funds are awarded to assist club or chapter members in bringing positive change by establishing projects that make their local communities better places to live. Applications are due by April 1, 2017.**

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*Scholarship applicants must meet all qualifications in application to be eligible **Grant and Ag Youth Funding applicants must be a member of a 4-H club or FFA chapter located in one of the 102 Missouri counties served by FCS Financial. Growing Relationships. Creating Opportunities. is a trademark of FCS Financial, ACA.

OKLAHOMA *OUTLOOK*

Winter 2016

Visiting Another World

As the agricultural community becomes increasingly global, it is crucial that young people considering careers in the industry understand the opportunities and challenges of international trade. With that objective in mind, National FFA provided an opportunity for 50 FFA members from across the country to visit agricultural sites in Costa Rica last summer and compare the industries in Central America and the United States. Of those 50 students, seven were from Oklahoma. We spoke with 2 of them earlier this year.

Kaylee Brunker is a student at OSU. A year ago, she was a student and an FFA member at Perkins-Tryon High School, where her dad is one of the ag teachers. Kaylee was a chapter officer for three years: reporter, secretary and president. She told us that "The goal of the trip was to see how diverse agriculture is in the different parts of the world. Just to see what kind of agriculture they have, how they do with what they have."

Kohl Murray is a senior at Perkins-Tryon. He is currently president of the local FFA chapter. Kohl's sister had taken the trip a couple of years earlier. "That's how I found out about it," he said. "I thought it would be really cool to leave the country and go somewhere else to see what their agriculture was like."

Costa Rica is a small country in Central America, located between Nicaragua and Panama. It's about the size of West Virginia. Kaylee told us she had expected rainforests and beaches, which there were, of course, but she went on to add" ... it is pretty diverse land. It was pretty cool because there were a bunch of volcanoes."

The group's first night was spent in San Jose, the capital of Costa Rica. Kohl made this observation,

"We stayed in San Jose one night at a hotel. There were people in the lobby and the restaurant all night long. They are lively, day and night. They're night owls and they go around a lot at night. Costa Rica is the country that never sleeps."

The tour started the next day and the first stop was the Starbucks coffee plantation. "The tour guide showed us the whole process of when they first plant the plant, all the way to selling it at the store," Kaylee said. "They plant coffee plants all up the side of the mountain and down in valleys. They don't have machines ... people go and pick every single bean off those coffee plants by hand."

Kohl added that a lot of Costa Rica is not very mechanized. "There's not much machinery," he said. "They get a lot of people, especially for the coffee plantation, from Nicaragua, Colombia or Panama. They can hire them and pay them so much per basket. They say it is a lot cheaper than getting machines, a lot more efficient."

The group visited the Dole banana plantation on the second day of the tour. This was relevant because banana exports are a very significant part of Costa Rica's economy. Strangely enough, they didn't eat any bananas while they were there. Kaylee told us, "One thing that surprised me—the number one crop they grow is bananas, but every time we went to a hotel to eat dinner, we were always offered pineapple and watermelon. We were never offered a banana to eat. We asked our tour guide about it, and he said they consider the banana just so common; it's like pig's food there. Like we wouldn't invite foreign people over and feed them peanut butter and jelly."

The third day found the group at an organic family

Continued on page H

Photographs courtesy Kaylee Brunker and Kohl Murray

Garrett Saunders

S.W. District Vice President

Hello, FFA members! I am Garrett Saunders from Binger, Okla., and I am incredibly honored to serve as your southwest district vice president.

My FFA career started like most. I was a shy kid who wanted anything but to be the center of attention. As an eighth-grader, I saw ag class as an opportunity to learn how to weld. Growing up on a farm, I knew that learning to weld efficiently would make a world of difference for my family's operation.

Needless to say, I learned a lot more than just how to weld as an eighth-grader. I learned the importance of being involved in an organization that is much bigger than myself.

The National FFA Organization opened so many doors for me. I was able to compete in several career development events and even gave speeches over important agricultural topics. I found my passion in the Agricultural Sales and Farm Business Management CDEs. These two events proved to me that FFA has something to offer everyone.

Looking back, I'm forever grateful to my agricultural education teacher for pushing me to get involved, to step out of my comfort zone and to build my self-confidence.

FFA members, you, too, must step out of your comfort zones to benefit from all your local chapters, state association and national organization have to offer. We must each try new things and develop our skills in different ways. That's the beauty of FFA. Make the most of it!

Garrett grew up on a Centennial Farm. It has been in his family over 100 years.

Meet Your 2016-2017 State Officers

Levi Baker

Central District Vice President

J.R.R. Tolkien once wrote, "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us." And so the question becomes: What will you do with your time?

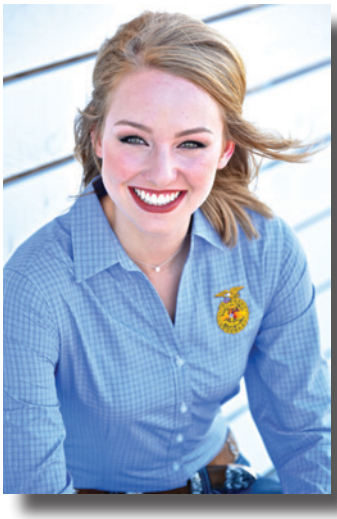
You and you alone have the power to answer this question. You have the ability either to waste your time or to make something of yourself. You can squander your time, believing that someone else will take care of the world's problems for you, or you can use this time that God has given you to better yourself and your world, even if it is but one small thing at a time. FFA members, you each have the chance to make an impact on the future.

This future, your future, is now. I can't promise that your future is all sunshine. I don't know how many bumps in the road there will be. I won't guarantee that any of this will be easy. But what I do promise, know and guarantee is that just as Tolkien once said, "Darkness must pass. A new day will dawn. And when the sun shines, it will shine out the clearer."

I challenge you to demand more of yourself. Settling for mediocrity is one way to ensure that is all you will ever get. Pursuing excellence caters success and drives those around you to achieve more. Push yourself and set the standard high for everything that you do, whether it be in your family, FFA career or relationship with Jesus Christ.

This is undoubtedly a daunting task and can seem overwhelming at first glance. It is scary to think about our future and the task before us. But do not be dismayed or discouraged. You belong to an organization that lifts you to new heights. The National FFA Organization surrounds you with people who encourage, push and love you. Never forget that just as each of us believes in the future of agriculture, so, too, do we believe in you. With some faith, hard work and good friends along the way, you can and will make your dreams reality.

As a member of Boys' Nation, Levi traveled to Washington, D.C., where he met and shook hands with President Obama.



Adrienne Blakey

State Reporter

Eighth grade was an interesting time for me. I was shy, awkward, uncoordinated and, strangely enough, competing in public speaking. I found myself in a nervous daze at the state speech contest as the spring was ending. Into the room I went, faced my judges and began. I made it through five paragraphs before I lost my memorization entirely without any recollection of what I had just said or what was to come next.

Ashamed, embarrassed and defeated, I walked to the car after the awards had gone by without mention of my name. I hadn't said my speech more than twice the week before the state contest, and it showed.

The next few years I struggled to have any luck with success as I found myself constantly comparing myself and being so caught up in the competition that I stopped focusing on how I was doing.

With a new ag teacher and a new speech season came a new motto: "Just go in there and do your thing. Don't worry about anyone else in that room. Just be you." With this new mindset put to action, I was able to reach my full potential.

FFA members, I don't tell you this story just so you can apply it to speech competitions. The beauty of FFA is that it provides chances for us to begin to grow to our fullest potential if we will let it. I encourage you to keep this mindset of being your best self in the things you're doing because if you do, you won't have any regrets. Just go out there and do your thing. Don't worry what everyone else is doing. Just be you. Your time in the corduroy jacket is limited; make the most of it.

Three things Adrienne loves: high heels, Harry Potter and avocados (not necessarily in that order).

Meet Your 2016-2017 State Officers

Cale Jahn

State President

I'm sure you have all noticed or seen this in action before, but allow me to set the stage for you: Two children stand with their mom and dad directly in front of the elementary school in town with tears flowing down the parents' faces. For them, their babies are starting life with a whole set of new friends, a brand new box of crayons and a good looking haircut. And even though their teacher is nice and even has an apple on her desk, the parents are reluctant to let go. For the kids though, it's a different story. All of their friends from T-ball are there, as well as some quality snacks and a playground to boot. Wow! To them, good things are about to happen.

For us, as FFA members, those elementary school days are a distant memory, but the principle remains the same. This story is a classic example of how each of us decides to respond to the situation in front of us. In the story, the parents exhibited a bit of worry and fear and let their emotions get the best of them. Their kids, however, were excited about the opportunities that lay ahead.

In 2017, each of us will face situations that will change our lives and the schools we attend. We can either stand quietly in fear of our own imagination, or we can make the remainder of this school year one that will positively change our lives forever. As we walk through those doors each day, we need to see it as a blessing for ourselves as well as others. When we finally decide to be the best version of who we are, others will see that.

FFA members, it will be due to our actions and the decision we make in 2017 that great things will truly happen. Go be great.

Cale's favs: the sport of rodeo, cowboy gear and "the smell" of cattle shows.

Saluting Two Hunger

If you've been reading Oklahoma Outlook for the last couple of years, you know a lot about the huge success of Oklahoma FFA's Hunger Challenge program. FFA chapters and members donate animals and cash to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma and the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma, otherwise known as the Oklahoma Food Banks, which provide beef and pork sticks, along with other food items, to needy children in Oklahoma schools.

In this issue, we'd like to feature two people, Lisa Perry and Thad Doye, without whom this success would not have been possible.

We know Lisa Perry as the Manager of Regional Giving at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma (RFBO). She was instrumental in making the connection between Oklahoma FFA and RFBO and getting the Hunger Challenge program off the ground. If your chapter ever volunteered at the Regional Food Bank before or after State Convention, chances are pretty good you met Ms. Perry.

Thad Doye is the Crop Insurance Manager for the Oklahoma Farm Bureau. He is also a pivotal part of the Hunger Challenge program. As he puts it, "I'm just the guy in the background hauling pigs." But Lisa Perry sees his role a little differently: "The program would absolutely not exist without Thad Doye."

When an FFA member or chapter has animals to donate, Mr. Doye will drive to their home or school, retrieve the animals and take them to the processor. He also picks up animals at the Tulsa State Fair and OYE, often as many as 150 at a time. The Farm Bureau covers 100% of his transportation costs."

To understand the important roles these two folks have played in our Hunger Challenge, you'll need a short history lesson: Mr. Doye and the Farm Bureau were involved with the Oklahoma Food Banks even before our Hunger Challenge started. During the Iraq war, Farm Bureau members donated cattle to the Farm Bureau, which had the meat processed into beef sticks that they sent to American soldiers in the war zone. That program was called Beef for Battle. As that war wound down and more and more troops were returning home from Iraq, the need for the program decreased.

The Farm Bureau didn't want to discontinue a successful program so they met with Bill Hendrix and Jack Miller at the Regional Food Bank to see about reinventing this program in a way that would benefit the Oklahoma Food Bank's clients. That is how Beef for Backpacks was born.

Bill Hendrix, Lisa Perry and Jack Miller at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma

A year into offering beef and pork sticks to RFBO students, Lisa Perry met with Mr. Hendrix and Mr. Miller to see if they thought it would be helpful to reach out to the FFA as a possible partner for the protein sticks since so many students were selling their livestock at the end of shows.

As Ms. Perry tells it, "We met with Kent Boggs (State FFA Executive Secretary) and Jack Staats (State FFA Advisor) to see if they liked our idea of partnering with the Oklahoma Food Banks on Beef for Backpacks and Pork for Packs. After that meeting the FFA Hunger Challenge was born and it has been a great success ever since."

Mr. Doye added, "The Oklahoma Food Banks got the FFA association involved, and that's when the pigs really multiplied. We went from 20 to 200. Literally."

That number is much higher now. During the last school year, Oklahoma FFA donated 515 animals to the Hunger Challenge, enough to make almost 800,000 protein sticks. "The lion's share of the livestock donated is pork. For every calf we received, we received 50 pigs," Ms. Perry said.

In addition to the beef and pork protein sticks, the backpacks include milk, cereal, applesauce, juice and sometime crackers and peanut butter and jelly. The Oklahoma Food Banks ensure that the items they provide are sized appropriately for a small child. They're all just open and eat items. Nothing needs to be refrigerated or cooked.

In the United States, 1 in 7 people struggles with hunger.

Challenge Partners

Thad Doye (Photos courtesy Dustin Mielke, Oklahoma Farm Bureau)

As a result of the recent economic downturn in Oklahoma, some of our school districts are changing to a four-day school week with a 3-day weekend. The Backpack Program is really intended to be only four and a half meals worth of food (basically a day and a half). "So when you're thinking about three days that you're away from school, that's a lot of meals. We are able to add more protein and other items to augment the pack—just so that it is maybe five or six meals worth of food across the board," said Ms. Perry.

There may be other changes as the program evolves. According to Ms. Perry, "The majority of the meat we receive is from the kids in the chapters who show pigs, which is awesome; but there are also a lot of kids who show sheep and goats who would like to participate. We're not able to process them into sticks, but we have had a few people donate their sheep or goats, and we sold them to a processor and received those funds, which then helped us pay for wrapping the beef sticks. Promoting that aspect and allowing kids who want to donate their sheep or goats could only help the program even more."

Both Ms. Perry and Mr. Doye have very positive impressions of and feelings about Oklahoma FFA. "Every year I've worked with them, they have exceeded my expectations," Ms. Perry said. "Not until I started working with FFA did I realize how many amazing programs they have that really prepare students, not only for college, but also for life and careers. I've really enjoyed working with FFA."

Mr. Doye has a similar point of view. "I had very good opinions of FFA when I started doing this," he said. "I have been involved in judging the FFA District Speech Contest, donating animals to judging contests—you know, just whatever." He speaks very highly of the FFA members, as well. "Every once in a while, I'll almost wear myself out chasing pigs, and some kid will say, 'I just want to do this to make sure my friends aren't hungry.' They show animals, they worked with them and they're close to them, and they want to see them used for a good cause. That kind of attitude wears on you."

In July of this year, Ms. Perry resigned her position at the Regional Food Bank and started a new chapter in her life as Director of Development for the Central Oklahoma Humane Society. We are thankful for the great work she has done with our Hunger Challenge and wish her the best of luck at the Humane Society.

Mr. Miller and Mr. Hendrix are going to take over the program at the Oklahoma Food Banks and have already met with Mr. Boggs and the new FFA state officers to make sure the program continues to move forward without interruption.

Mr. Doye continues to pick up and transport donated animals on our behalf. He often takes them to his own home, waters, feeds and cares for them until the processors can process them. The Farm Bureau subsidizes the cost of that service, as well. It is a fact: Without Mr. Doye and the Farm Bureau, Oklahoma FFA's Hunger Challenge would not be possible.

Oklahoma FFA is extremely grateful for what Ms. Perry and Mr. Doye have contributed to the success of our Hunger Challenge. We couldn't have done it without them.

Visiting Another World

Continued from page A

farm. As Kaylee tells it," ... It was cool because that was the only time we got to see pineapples. Apparently pineapples are considered the devil's fruit because they take two whole years to grow one pineapple, and then they die ... but every time we ate, they always served us pineapple, and it was the best pineapple I've ever eaten in my life."

On Day 4, the group went to the Don Fernando Farm, a corporation of farms dedicated to the fattening of high-quality livestock, in this case, cattle. The most common cattle breed in Costa Rica is Brahman. "It tasted very similar to Angus beef, but it was a lot more marbled. They were actually a lot better than what we were expecting," Kohl said. He went on to explain a significant difference between North American and Costa Rican ranching methods. "They do a feed rationing system. They mix pineapples in some of their cattle feed. They say they get fat really quickly with the pineapple. Since it is so sweet, they eat so much of it."

And speaking of livestock, there are also a large number of crocodiles in Costa Rica. Kaylee liked that. "One time, we passed over this bridge, and it was like twenty crocodiles on the riverbank," she said. "That was so cool. Our tour guide said crocodiles were going extinct, so a lot of people in Costa Rica had crocodile farms. Now they have an abundance of crocodiles. The people still have crocodile farms, but they think crocodiles are, not sacred, but they're protected. They don't sell the crocodiles for the skin or meat or anything, they just keep them."

Looking back, both Kaylee and Kohl enjoyed the trip very much. Kaylee spoke highly of the Costa Rican people. "They were always really nice and a lot of them spoke English. They were all just really nice and welcoming." Kohl was impressed with their farming methods, which were in some ways primitive relative to Oklahoma, but seemed most appropriate for Costa Rica. "Costa Rica is very rural and it is a very conservative place," he said. "They use everything. They don't let anything go to waste. They do a lot more soil management than what we do here in the United States. They take a lot better care of the land."

Additional information about the Proficiency & Stars Travel Seminar is available on the National FFA website.

In our next issue: Behind the scenes at OSU Homecoming

Vision of Virginia

WINTER 2016

TRANSFORM

PURPOSE TO ACTION

FEATURES

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UPCOMING EVENTS

January:
12 - 13: Virginia ACTE Leadership Seminar
19 - 20: Early Teacher's Conference
19 - 21: VAAE Winter In-service
31 - Feb. 2: National FFA In-service
February:
18 - 25: National FFA Week
March:
13 - 15: ACTE National Policy Seminar
18: State Parliamentary Procedure
31 - April 2: Virginia Institute on Cooperative Education

State Presidents' Conference

by Ashley Yanego
VA FFA 2016-2017 President

"Break Through, Break Through, FFA!," State FFA Presidents and either Vice Presidents or Secretaries from nearly all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, would shout at the beginning of every session. In Alexandria, Virginia, from July 25 - 29, National FFA Officers facilitated the State Presidents' Conference. Throughout the week, we learned engagement skills, assigned roles to the delegate issues for National Convention & Expo, advocated for agricultural education and the FFA, met representatives of National FFA Sponsors (CSX Transportation, Dow AgroSciences, and Archer Daniels Midland Company), and met with FFA Alumni from all over the nation.

What are we to do when asked questions about agriculture and the National FFA organization this year? SPC guests, Donna Moenning and Jana McGuire from The Center for Food Integrity, shared experiences and tips on ways we can effectively engage with anyone we meet this year, whether it be the media, a stakeholder, or an agricultural instructor. We all need to be effective advocates for the National FFA Organization and the agriculture industry.

A day in the heart of DC included a National FFA wreath laying on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, showcasing the blue jacket at some famous memorial sites, and advocating for agricultural education and FFA on Capitol Hill. Once Phillip and I made it through the hustle and bustle of "the Hill," we found ourselves advocating for agricultural education, FFA, and even lobbying for a bill supporting supervised agricultural experiences. We spoke to legislative assistants of Representative Robert Scott, Congressman Bob Goodlate, and Senator Tim Kaine about the role agricultural education and FFA plays in lives of students and the future of agriculture. Walking through the buildings, we were also able to do a bit of advocating to people going in and out of offices.

As members of a student-led organization, we are able to shape and mold our organization. At SPC, state associations submitted delegate proposals that are intended to positively impact the FFA. Collectively, we chose six delegate issues for State Delegates to further discuss and form a report throughout the week at the National Convention & Expo. Along with delegate information, the skills gained from this week have been brought back to Virginia to utilize for a great year.

NLCSO National Leadership Conference for State Officers

by Isabelle Leonard
VA FFA 2016-2017 Reporter

The Virginia State Officer Team attended the National Leadership Conference for State Officers (NLCSO) held in Davis, West Virginia in late July. This training prepared the state officers to better serve Virginia FFA members throughout the year.

National FFA facilitates this conference to help state officer teams set goals, identify their team strengths and weaknesses, and learn workshop delivery techniques. Virginia State Officers were joined by state officers from New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Maryland, as well as the National President, Taylor McNeel. Throughout the week, teams took turns performing opening ceremonies, flag raisings, and evening reflections. Virginia State Officers focused their reflection on life's journey: looking back to where we came from, identifying defining moments, and then setting goals for the future.

Breaks from the conference's work agenda included a dance, bonding time, and a breathtaking ride on a ski lift through the scenic Canaan Valley. New friendships were formed between officers from different states and much was learned about FFA and agriculture in other areas of the country. State Officer teams competed

throughout the week to win the coveted Felicia the Llama spirit stick for energy and performance.

The state officer team would like to thank the sponsors that made NLCSO possible, including John Deere, BASF, Monsanto, Land O' Lakes, BNSF Railway Company, Wrangler, and Archer Daniels Midland Company. Another big thank you goes out to West Virginia FFA for hosting us and to the conference facilitators National President Taylor McNeel, former National President and Virginia President Brian Walsh, and former State Officer Bethany Blackburn.

SOFT and Media Training

by Kelly Callender
VA FFA 2016-2017 Treasurer

Through Aug. 8-16, the Virginia State FFA Officers traveled to numerous places across the state to learn about facilitating and media training. The first two days were spent in Bridgewater, Virginia with Mr. Jesse Martin, where the state officers learned about their purpose and mission for the upcoming year. Following the sessions with Mr. Martin, the team went to the Virginia Farm Bureau office in Richmond, where they met with Mr. Andrew Smith. Mr. Smith set up several speakers to educate the state officers on current ag issues, as well as practicing television interviews and other media training. The officer team also visited the Harrisonburg Farm Credit of the Virginias Office where they met with Mr. Matt Lohr and learned about public speaking. Over last few days of training, the team rode into the mountains to the Wintergreen Resort where they learned facilitation skills and planned this year's workshops with Mr. Zach Wakeman, agriculture teacher at James River High School.

2016 Young Farmers Summer Expo

Battlefields to Farm Fields

It's our Past, Present, and Future

by Keri Knott

VA FFA 2016-2017 Sentinel

The 2016 Young Farmers Expo was held in beautiful Fredericksburg, Virginia. This jam-packed weekend was filled with tours of historic battlefields and agricultural facilities including a flower nursery, farmers market operation and feed lot. The Outstanding Young Agriculturalist, Discussion Meet, and Excellence in Agriculture contests also took place.

Davis Fenster from James River High School placed first in the Outstanding Young Agriculturalist Contest and will present his speech at the Virginia Farm Bureau Annual State Convention.

Keri Knott from the Magna Vista FFA Chapter was first runner up in the Outstanding Young Agriculturalist Contest.

Throughout the week, Virginia's Agriculture in the Classroom held a friendly competition to decide who would get a pie to the face as they raised funds to support Agriculture in the Classroom. Ron Saacke with Virginia Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Morgan Slaven with Agriculture in the Classroom both received multiple pies to the face at the conclusion of the picnic dinner that Saturday night.

The Virginia FFA Association State Officer team enjoyed the opportunity to speak with Senator Bryce Reeves about agriculture, education and FFA.

The weekend concluded with a picnic dinner at the Chamber's Farm in Mine Run with the contest awards ceremony.

The State Officer Team looks forward to attending the Winter Young Farmers Expo in February!

Food Science

The Food Science and Technology CDE requires students to have an in-depth understanding of food product development and presentation and food safety issues. Participants use their sensory skills to solve problems and make sound decisions.

This year's CDE was hosted at Virginia Tech with five teams competing. Thank you to Kim Waterman and the Food Science Technology Department for putting on the event.

Teams

1st Place: Central
2nd Place: Turner Ashby
3rd Place: Broadway

High Individuals

1st Place: Abby Colemon
2nd Place: Catherine Bulatto
3rd Place: Elizabeth Loving
4th Place: Lenzi Loving
5th Place: Jordan Cooper

VT Fall Leadership Conference

by Cailin Orgen
VA FFA 2015-2016 Vice President

The Virginia Tech Fall Leadership Conference was held at Squires Student Center this year on Virginia Tech's campus in early October. Middle school and high school FFA members from all over the state gathered for this event. Students had a blast participating in workshops focusing on core leadership skills and abilities. We had awesome facilitators that presented workshops allowing members to explore different opportunities for becoming stronger leaders and better versions of themselves. This conference was a great chance for members to mingle with their chapters and to make new friends with members from other chapters. At the end of the day, this trip was a great experience for everyone and gave each member the opportunity to transform into the leaders that they want to be.

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FFA CAMP

July 10-14, 2017
Graves Mountain Lodge - Syria, VA

"**One of the best weeks** of our year for developing leadership and citizenship among our officers. Highly recommended for both middle school and high school."

"FFA Camp taught me to remember at every beginning, there is someone who inspired you, **be that inspiration** to someone else!"

"Leadership camp has done much more than **teach me how to become a better leader**. It has taught me who I am and who I want to be."

Star Member

AUSTIN WEAVER

Age: 19
Chapter: Strasburg

As a 6th grader not knowing what he was doing in an agriculture class, Austin Weaver joined FFA "on a whim." Weaver, 19, from the Strasburg FFA Chapter, has had many experiences in FFA. Among his favorite experiences has been representing Virginia FFA in the National Extemporaneous Public Speaking CDE and placing in the top 15 of the nation. He is also a National Agricultural Proficiency Award Finalist in Agricultural Education. Currently a collegiate FFA member, Austin is studying International Agriculture and Rural Development in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University. Throughout the years, agriculture classes and FFA sparked Austin's interest in agriculture. He hopes to pursue a career in agribusiness or agricultural finance.

Weaver says that some of the greatest experiences of his life have come through FFA. **"FFA means unlimited opportunities.** We have these opportunities thanks to our sponsors who truly recognize the value of a youth organization focused on premier leadership, personal growth, and career success."

Weaver has experienced firsthand the assistance sponsors provide to FFA members. "I would ask that they continue their affiliation with the FFA so that members can have unlimited opportunities through such a great organization," Weaver said.

Weaver's advice to those who are unsure if they want to join FFA is that there is an activity or opportunity for every person and every interest. "Just give it a try. I can guarantee they wouldn't regret their decision to join even if they don't stick with it," Weaver said.

The Big E

by Sydney Baxter
VA FFA 2016-2017 Vice President

This September, FFA members and advisors traveled to Springfield, Massachusetts where they were able to compete at the 100th anniversary of the Big E. Awards were plentiful and presented within the presence of Central Region National Vice President, Abrah Meyers, and National FFA's new CEO, Mark Poeschl. Adventures began after a restful bus ride on September 15th. Students were prepared and ready to represent Virginia in Career Development Events and Leadership Development Events the next day. Students were able to compete against more than 10 different states in over 15 CDEs and LDEs. After their hard work and studying paid off, members had the opportunity to enjoy the century-old fair.

At this fair, one can actually visit six different states within 60 minutes by visiting the Avenue of States. A replica of each state's capital building is present, and in each state capital building, one could learn about the agriculture and other industries of each state. This also includes trying an awesome dish that is famous in each state. On the other side of the fair, butter sculptures were in the making and elephant rides were available. There were also many opportunities to learn more about agriculture, like at the Farm to Family Table booth. This was where a few state officers from multiple states spent their time helping advocate for agriculture by educating fair goers on where their food comes from.

On the final night of the Big E, the moment of truth had come. Blue jackets from multiple states swarmed the Grand Ballroom at the Sheraton Hotel to attend the awards banquet. Before awards were presented, keynote speeches were given by Central Region National Vice President, Abrah Meyers, and National FFA's new CEO, Mark Poeschl. Congratulations to all members that competed at the Big E! These students worked very hard to get to where they are today, and represented Virginia well.

There were also many opportunities to learn more about agriculture, like at the Farm to Family Table booth.

Ag Business Management
Eastern View - 5th Place
High Individuals - 7th Place: Eric Jenkins

Ag Tech Mechanics
Randolph Henry - 5th Place
High Individuals - 7th Place: Conner White

Agriscience
Lord Botetourt - 1st Place: Claire Seibel
Lord Botetourt -1st Place: Tess Seibel
Strasburg - Bronze: Tiffany Heishman

Creed Speaking
Chatham High - 4th Place: Logan Mills

Dairy Cattle Evaluation
Clarke - 4th Place
6th Place: Mikayla St Clair
8th Place: Madison Palmer

Milk & Dairy Products
Spotswood - 2nd Place
High Individuals - 2nd: Bailey Carpente

Environmental & Natural Resources
Broadway - 4th Place
High Individuals - 9th Place: Alec Turner

Food Science and Technology
Strasburg - 5th Place

Forestry
Lord Botetourt - 4th Place
High Individuals - 6th Place: Claire Seibel
9th Place: Tess Seibel

Livestock
Riverheads - 1st Place
High Individuals - 1st Place: Jake Mccall
2nd Place: Ryan Sensabaugh
4th Place: Luke Jennings
5th Place: Zach Mccall

Horse Evaluation
Blacksburg - 1st Place
High Individuals - 3rd Place: Michaela Bethard
6th Place: Holly Newberne

Marketing Plan
East Rockingham - 2nd Place

Poultry
Riverheads - 5th Place

Tractor Safety
Chatham High - 1st Place: Logan Mills

Veterinary Science
Magna Vista - 3rd Place

Through the Lens *of a State Officer*

by Ashley Yanego

VA FFA 2016-2017 President

We all contribute to the big picture. Every painter provides diverse details to make the masterpiece. We all have a vision for the finished product. Let's not rush into our vision, because then we step back and see a blob of color. It is important to take time and appreciate the details of every painter contributing to the big picture. Our visions may change, but in the end it is a masterpiece.

by Phillip Saunders

VA FFA 2016-2017 Secretary

Famous athletes aren't born as spectacular athletes. They start out just like you and me. So what makes them better? Unlike many others who run off raw talent, they work daily to be the best. Diligence made them and can also make us good, or even great at anything. When we work hard, we will stand out and be rewarded for our work, and we will change the lives of others in the process.

by Clay Graham

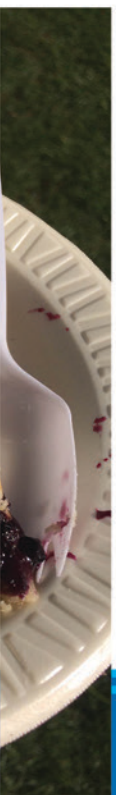
VA FFA 2016-2017 Vice President

When I'm able to come home from my travels across the state I'm always welcomed with the same love and caring that helped me achieve this opportunity in the first place. This makes me realize that our homes are where it all begins whether we are serving Virginia FFA or simply going to college.

by Sydeny Baxter

VA FFA 2016-2017 Vice President

Have you ever noticed a clock in a photo? This clock is frozen in time, but the world still moves around it. We cannot freeze time in our busy lives. Time and opportunities in our jackets are limited. Always remember, live today to the fullest, not frozen in the past.



by Isabelle Leonard

VA FFA 2016-2017 Reporter

This may look like your typical blueberry pie, but this pie is made of Wild Blueberries, a plant native to Maine. At the Big E, I learned about this specialized type of blueberry and thought: what else don't I know about agriculture? This experience showed me that there is always more to learn.

by Kelly Callender

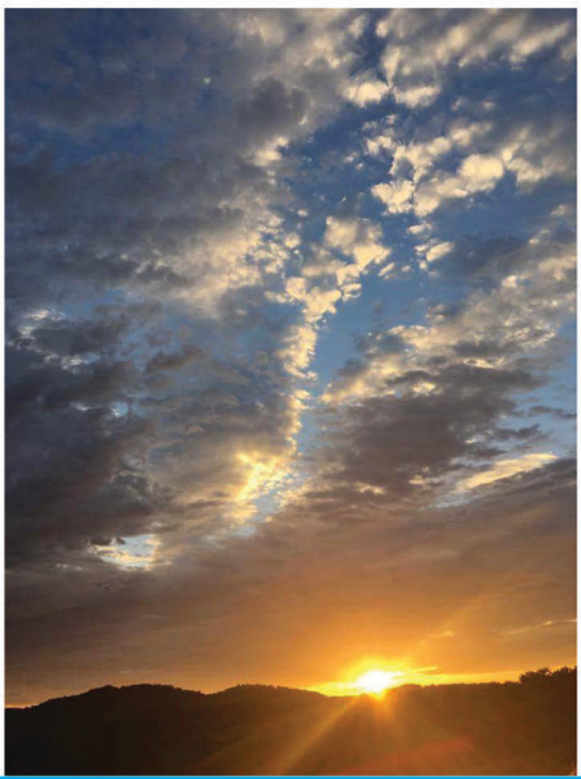
VA FFA 2016-2017 Treasurer

Every day that I am home, I spend the time with my family and my cows. Every day, I notice different patterns and personalities that my Holsteins have. Like the spots on a Holstein, every new member I meet is unique and interesting. I have learned so much from students already in my year of service and can't wait to interact with more new members in upcoming chapter events.

by Keri Knott

VA FFA 2016-2017 Sentinel

With every sunrise a new day is born. New opportunities to make a difference and shine our light awaits us every day. Don't miss a chance to make a difference and shine your light!



@virginiaffa

State Area Conferences

by Clay Graham
VA FFA 2016-2017 Vice President

Appalachian Area Leadership Conference

The Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon, Virginia hosted members for the annual Appalachian Fall Leadership Conference. State officers Clay, Kelly and Isabelle presented to members how each one needs to chase the opportunities FFA has to offer and the benefits these opportunities hold.

Appalachian area members who hope to run for state office this year and in the years to come had the chance to learn how they can prepare for this opportunity. Appalachian area officers showed middle school members how they can become active even as young middle school members and the special areas that are meant for them. Past state officers Daniel Black and Zach Jacobs presented workshops on teamwork and how to effectively advocate not only for the FFA, but what we are passionate about.

South Ridge Chapter Officer Leadership Conference

At the South Ridge Chapter Officer Leadership Conference, chapter officers gained the leadership skills to successfully lead their chapters this year. State officers Clay and Keri started to grow leaders through a workshop on being a lifelong learner.

State officers Phillip and Isabelle showed members how to build their communities back home by communicating to members the importance of stakeholders and how to engage with them. Past state officer, Chandler Vaughn, taught about the value of time management and balancing FFA, school, and other daily tasks in our lives. Members got to meet their new South Ridge officers as they demonstrated how to work effectively as a team.

Southeast Chapter Officer Leadership Training

On Sept. 20th, members from across the Southeast met at Dinwiddie High school for the Southeast Chapter Officer Leadership Training. State officers Keri, Sydney, Phillip, Isabelle and Clay started off the night educating members that time is important and we need to manage it to be successful. Clay and Keri taught members to be leaders and continually learning. Isabelle and Phillip taught members in the Southeast area how we can identify stakeholders and how to interact with them to not only strengthen our chapters, but our communities as a whole. Sydney Baxter presented a workshop that taught members how we can work as a team, find out what our purpose is on that team, and what our expectations are for our teams this year.

Northern Area Leadership Conference

Members from across the Northern Area convened at Signal Knob Middle School for the Northern Area Leadership Conference, held on Sept. 26th. Strasburg Officers taught members about SAE's and some of their personal SAE's. State officers Ashley and Clay showed members that we need to have the right passion, right info, and right audience when we want to advocate for the important things in our life. Finally, members learned how CDE's and LDE's can prepare us as FFA members for career success once we leave the FFA. State officers Kelly and Isabelle showed the many opportunities FFA can take us in life. They also helped members figure out how to be a successful chapter officer. Kelly and Isabelle then taught members how we can be effective public speakers.

Chapter Chats

Appomattox FFA Wins 1st Annual "Souper Bowl"

by Kelly Price
ACHS FFA 2016-2017 Reporter

All proceeds from the "Souper Bowl" were donated to two local food pantries.

Food insecurity is a growing issue in Appomattox and Buckingham Counties. In order to help provide nutritional assistance to needy families in both localities, the Appomattox Sr. and Buckingham Sr. FFA chapters partnered together to tackle the problem. Officer teams worked together to draft a canned food drive competition between the two schools and dubbed the event the, "Souper Bowl." Both schools collected donations and canned food for five days prior to the opening varsity football game between the rival schools. FFA chapters rallied their respective student bodies to collect as many canned goods as possible. The objectives of the Souper Bowl were to: Host a competitive community service event with a neighboring FFA chapter; raise at least $700 worth of food for our local community in five days, involve at least 50 percent of the student body in a canned food drive, and host a chapter tailgate before a football game to build support between the FFA chapter and the athletic program.

Prior to the football game, Appomattox hosted the Buckingham chapter at a tailgate. Chapters enjoyed a tasty tailgate meal and challenged each other to rousing games of bean-bag tossing, panty-hose bowling, a three-legged race, and a football toss. Buckingham FFA beat Appomattox 3-1 in tailgate festivities.

Chapter officers from both schools were invited to the 50-yard line in front of a sold-out crowd during halftime at the Friday night varsity football game. Ninety-five percent of first block classes at ACHS chipped in to help the Raiders win the Souper Bowl contest. Raider fans also helped give Appomattox a last-minute surge by donating a host of canned goods before halftime. ACHS collected $1,898 worth of food. The Buckingham Knights collected $927. Each school's collected donations will be kept locally to help fight food insecurity.

ADVISOR HIGHLIGHT

Mr. Ed McCann Sr.

Advisor - Nelson Senior

1. What does your agricultural background look like?

I always loved animals since I was a child. I worked on a certified Black Angus farm and the most progressive dairy operation in Virginia when coming through school. We have a small farm where we raise sheep and have a small wood lot.

2. Why did you get involved in teaching?

I wanted to be a veterinarian. At the time, only four Pre-Vet students from Virginia Tech were admitted each year to Georgia. I knew out of over 600 animal science majors I was not in the top ten. A good friend who was in Animal Science with me told me he was transferring to agricultural education as his father was a VA Area Supervisor. He knew he could get a job teaching and told me I could too. So I listened to him. I loved agriculture and what I was studying at Virginia Tech so I duel majored in animal science and agricultural education at Virginia Tech. My cooperating teacher asked me after student teaching if I enjoyed it, I needed to become an agriculture teacher and get my master's degree. I did and have never looked back.

3. How have you been able to transfer knowledge to the classroom?

Students need to know how this applies to them in today's world. Hands-on activities through FFA community service projects, career development events, leadership development, and cooperative activities all help with the transfer of knowledge. Having a good mechanics program where projects for SAE's can be developed, bringing in guest speakers, and alumni members also do a lot for students to learn.

4. After years of teaching, what would your advice be to a new agriculture teacher?

You have to have a passion for what you are doing. You have to fight for your program. To reach students takes a time commitment that often means sacrificing nights, weekends, holidays and summer vacation in order to build a program that will have a significant impact on the future of your students. Be patient. Students will sense that you are trying to help them. Get help from sharp people and get advice. Most likely you do not know it all. Have fun with your students but remain professional. It will take a while to build a program so don't get discouraged. Your students are the best thing that their parents sent to you. Teach like your life depended on it.

2016 VIRGINIA STATE FAIR WINNERS

THE STATE FAIR

by Sydney Baxter
VA FFA 2016-2017 Vice President

Rain or shine, the State Fair of Virginia was overflowing with FFA members ready to compete in a variety of CDEs. Eight different CDEs were offered within a four-day period at the end of September. These included Tractor Troubleshooting, Small Engines Troubleshooting, Lawn Tractor Operators Safety, Junior Dairymen's, Horticulture Demonstration, AgriScience Demonstration, Forestry Field Day, Junior Forester's and Crops Judging. Competition was in the air, as students demonstrated what they had spent hours practicing. After the hard work was over, members were able to enjoy the fair before awards were presented each afternoon. Congratulations to all members that competed at the State Fair. The Virginia FFA Association would like to thank all of those who helped us run CDEs smoothly this year.

Horticulture Demonstration

1st - Emma Krise & Hannah Sampson, Millbrook
2nd - Grayson Moyer & Erin Orgen, Sherando
3rd – Allison Haran & Haley Warren, Magna Vista

Agriscience Demonstration – Junior

1st - Megan Pollok, Tunstall

Agriscience Demonstration – Senior

1st - Madison Montgomery & Seth Shifflett, Wilson Memorial

Tractor Troubleshooting

Top Teams

1st - Culpeper County
Dustin Ros & Brent Hansen
2nd - Appomattox
Frankie Hoffman & Andrew Sams
3rd - Abingdon
Canan Large & Bailey Jonas

Small Engines

Top Individuals

1st - Jeremy Johnsen, Highland
2nd - Daniel Folds, Atlee
3rd - Kenny Rock, John S. Battle

Lawn Tractor

Top Individuals

1st - Michael Brown, Randolph-Henry
2nd - Johnathan Wootson, King William
3rd - Jeremy Johnsen, Highland

Jr. Dairymans Senior

Top FFA Individuals

1st - David Ames, Sherando
2nd - Emma Seekford, Spotswood
3rd - Timothy Paulson, Spotswood

Top Teams

1st- Sherando
2nd- Spotswood

Jr. Dairymans Junior

Top FFA Individuals

1st - Elizabeth Goodwine
2nd - Peyton Fravel
3rd - Jordan Kelly

Top FFA Teams

1st - J. Frank Hillyard
2nd - Elkton Middle

Junior Foresters

Top FFA Individuals

1st - Noah Fitzgerald, Nelson Senior
2nd - Russell Schmidt, Randolph-Henry
3rd - Ruth Fitzgerald, Nelson Senior

Top Teams

1st - Randolph-Henry
2nd - Nelson Senior

Senior Forestry Field Day

1st - Randolph-Henry
2nd - Alleghany
3rd - Nelson Senior

Junior Forestry Field Day

1st - Randolph-Henry
2nd - Carroll County Middle
3rd - Nelson Middle

Crops - Senior

Top FFA Individuals

1st - Ruth Fitzgerald, Nelson Senior
2nd - Jacob Phillips, Nelson Senior
3rd - Kelsy Fitzgerald, Nelson Senior

Top Teams

1st - Nelson Senior
2nd - Sherando

Crops - Junior

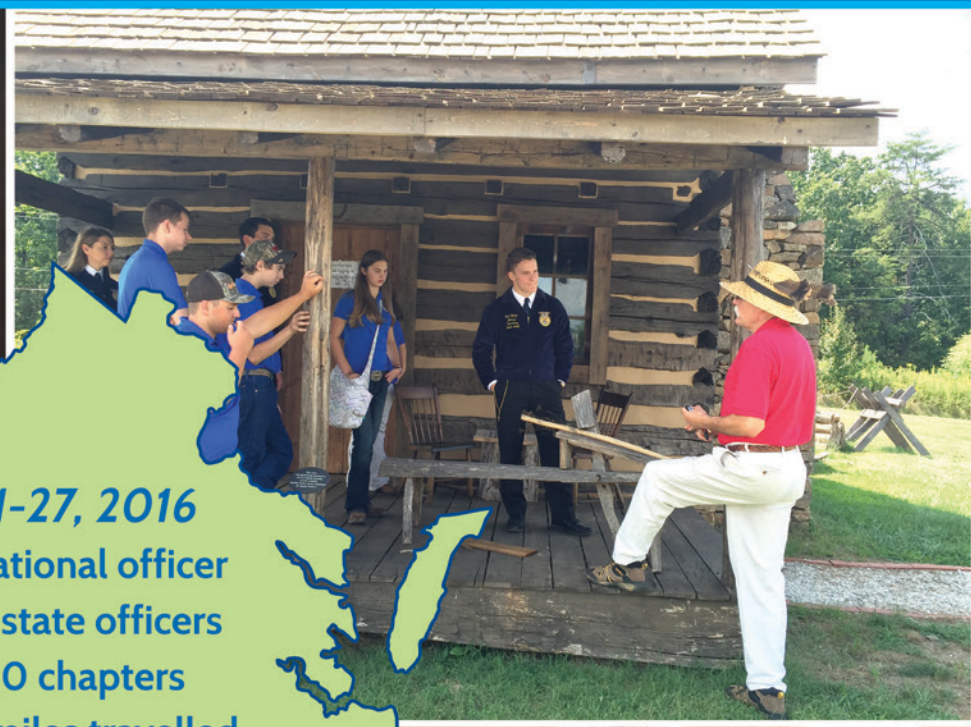
Top FFA Individuals

1st- Victoria Pewtress
2nd- Hannah Geesaman
3rd- Maryann Johnson

Top Teams

1st - Nelson Middle
2nd - Southhampton Junior

National Officer Visit



Aug. 21-27, 2016

- One national officer
- Seven state officers
- Over 20 chapters
- 2,148 miles travelled

Thank you

Nick Baker for your time spent investing in the lives of members across Virginia.