



NEW

Spring 2017

HORIZONS

FFANEWHORIZONS.ORG

**CHECK OUT
OUR NEW DESIGN!**

**EASTON
CORBIN
ON FFA**

"IT ALL
TRANSLATES
TO MY
CAREER
TODAY"

I AM FFA!

**PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT
COREY FLOURNOY PROVES THAT
FFA IS FOR EVERYONE**

***National
Officers***

**A YEAR OF SERVICE
+ A LASTING LEGACY**



TRANSFORM YOUR COMMUNITY

Living to Serve Community Development Grants

Ideas to Get You Started:



COMMUNITY SAFETY

Need: Farm safety

Day of Service: Host a farm safety day for the community.

Semester or Yearlong: Partner with farmers to map land for emergency responders.



HUNGER, HEALTH + NUTRITION

Need: Rising obesity rates

Day of Service: Host healthy cooking classes.

Semester or Yearlong: Organize a community-wide walking challenge.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Need: Neighborhood improvement

Day of Service: Identify senior citizens to help with home and yard maintenance.

Semester or Yearlong: Reclaim vacant lots and turn them into safe, usable neighborhood space.



ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Need: Increasing landfill usage

Day of Service: Hold a community-wide electronics recycling collection day.

Semester or Yearlong: Create a school-wide composting program.

Important 2017 Dates

Yearlong: \$3,000 - Application due June 15.

Semester-long: \$1,200 - First semester application due Sept. 1.

Day of Service: \$400 - Rolling application due on the last day of every month.

For more information, visit FFA.org/LivingToServe.

THE NEW FFA NEW HORIZONS

Allow me to be the first to welcome you to the redesigned *FFA New Horizons* magazine. As you flip through these pages, it's my hope that you see yourselves — and your passions — in the stories we share. You'll find many topics you've grown to expect, alongside fresh concepts we hope resonate with you.

The magazine now also incorporates *New Visions*, the former magazine for FFA Alumni members. It is our belief that combining the two groups will not only inspire young people to become alumni members but also assure alumni that there is a bright future with today's FFA members. That is precisely what *FFA New Horizons* will do. Throughout this magazine, we share with you the impactful and encouraging stories of FFA members, as well as the wise perspectives and inspiring involvement of FFA Alumni.

For instance, in "Face the Nation" (page 10), we present the impressive 2016-17 National FFA Officers and provide an update on the legacy that the 2015-16 National FFA Officers leave.

"Take Off!" (page 16) details the work Indiana's South Newton FFA and North Newton FFA chapters put into winning a grant to incorporate drone technology into a precision agriculture curriculum. The courses educate students on some of the most advanced ag practices. An alumni member weighs in on the value of this education — and the technology itself — on the farm.

Thank you for your FFA membership and all you do to feed and fuel the world. You'll hear from our new editor, Justin Davey, in future editions. Enjoy the new *FFA New Horizons*.

Here by the owl,



Dr. Steve A. Brown
National FFA Advisor



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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.

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.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

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.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STATEMENT

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.

AG EDUCATION'S Centennial Celebration

HONORING THE LEGISLATION THAT LED TO
RELEVANT CAREER AND TECHNICAL TEACHING.

LET'S CELEBRATE
A CENTURY OF
AGRICULTURAL
EDUCATION IN
AMERICA'S SCHOOLS
AND THE PROGRESS
THE SMITH-HUGHES
ACT HAS GRANTED
STUDENTS AND
AGRICULTURALISTS
WORLDWIDE.

Can you imagine an education system that didn't offer a single animal science, horticulture or home economics class? This was the reality for students in America in the early 20th century. Classroom education didn't provide much practical use for students, especially those in rural areas where roughly three-quarters of all Americans lived and worked. School attendance numbers dwindled. In 1908, only 3 percent of all students attended high school and 3 percent attended college.

Noticing the drop-off, U.S. Senator Hoke Smith and Representative Dudley Hughes, both from Georgia, drafted the Smith-Hughes Act to make funds available to pay "the salaries of teachers, supervisors, and directors of agricultural subjects" such as "trade, home economics, and industrial subjects." President Woodrow Wilson signed the act into law in 1917, and for the first time, there was a path to relevant career and technical education in America.

The act eventually empowered the development of FFA. In 1928, a group of vocational agriculture students met in Kansas City, Mo., during the American Royal Livestock Show.

There, Future Farmers of America was formed.

This year, let's celebrate a century of agricultural education in America's schools and the progress the Smith-Hughes Act has granted students and agriculturalists worldwide.

You can watch a video about the Smith-Hughes Act at vimeo.com/184897168.

18-25 Feb:

NATIONAL FFA WEEK

Celebrate with an ag teacher appreciation breakfast, ag Olympics, community service projects and more.

21 Feb:

GIVE FFA DAY

Help meet various needs that impact FFA members. Make your meaningful gift at donate.FFA.org.

6-10 Mar:

NATIONAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK

Eating a nutritious breakfast can help students fuel up for success. Encourage your school district to participate!

21 Mar:

NATIONAL AG DAY

This year's theme is "Agriculture: Food For Life." Use the day to advocate and to celebrate your FFA membership.

27 Mar:

REGION ONE (B) ALUMNI REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

REGISTRATION OPENS

Visit FFA.org/gotordc to register for a free Alumni RDC, held May 19-20 in San Luis Obispo, Calif.

24 Apr:

REGION TWO (A) ALUMNI REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

REGISTRATION OPENS

Register at FFA.org/gotordc for a free Alumni RDC, held June 16-17 in Fort Collins, Colo.



COMMUNITY *Quotes*

FIELD Support

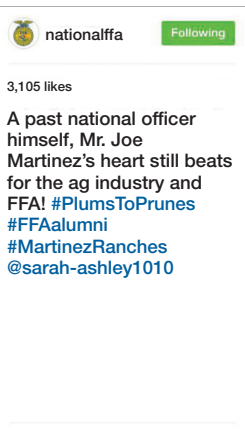
With planting season around the corner, there's no shortage of work to be done on the farm. Here are four ways you can help lighten the load and kick the 2017 season off to the best possible start.

1. PLAN IT OUT. Sit down before planting and help map out fields, plan orders and record what seed variations go to each field. You'll lend a helping hand and learn a lot, too.

2. TUNE IT UP. Nearly all equipment has technology that needs to be tuned up prior to planting. You might understand the high-tech features better than an older generation, so put your skills to good use!

3. WORK YOUR WAY UP. If you haven't helped out in the field before, you may have to start with simple tasks, such as tilling the fields and trimming the fence lines.

4. SCOUT IT OUT. Work isn't finished once planting is complete. Scout fields after planting for emergence issues, nutrient deficiencies and weed infestations to help plan in-season management. Write down what you find so you can implement it in next year's management strategy.



California Ag Today with **Nettie Gutierrez** and **Charmayne Hefley**

Our reporter **Charmayne Hefley** enjoyed the first day at **World Ag Expo**. She shopped by to show how she's **#FFAProud** to be an **#FFAalumni** at the **California FFA** booth. Be sure to check back for the stories she and the rest of the team learn this week!

READ ABOUT CHICAGO HIGH SCHOOL FOR AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES GRADUATE AND PAST NATIONAL FFA PRESIDENT COREY FLOURNOY ON PAGE 20.





Pop QUIZ: FFA FRAMEWORK

Surprise! It's time to see how well you recall important dates in FFA history. Can you match these events with the years they took place?

1. What year was the Smith-Hughes Act enacted? Learn more about the important legislation on page 2.
 2. What year was Corey Flournoy, the first African-American to serve as national FFA president, elected? Read more about Flournoy's work for diversity in agriculture on page 20.
 3. When were alumni officially established as a class of membership in the FFA constitution?
 4. What year did the first FFA Week take place? Check out the calendar on page 2 for the 2017 National FFA Week dates.
- A. 1994 | This was one year before the debut of the first FFA website.
 - B. 1917 | FFA was officially established 11 years later.
 - C. 1948 | The first FFA Chorus and Talent program was held at the National FFA Convention & Expo this year, too.
 - D. 1969 | FFA also opened up membership to women this year.

Answers: 1: B; 2: A; 3: D; 4: C



TALKING POINTS: #SpeakAg

In preparation for National Ag Day on March 21, think about how you might answer potential questions consumers have about agriculture. Riley Pagett, the director of advocacy and government relations for the National FFA Organization, provides some ideas.

Q: IS AGRICULTURE STILL RELEVANT? DO FARMERS STILL EXIST?

A: Now more than ever, the world needs people pursuing careers in agriculture to feed, fuel and clothe a growing population. Not only do farmers and ranchers help achieve those goals, but there are 235 unique careers in the science, business and technology sectors of agriculture. Check out AgExplorer.com for more information.

Q: ARE FARMERS TRUSTWORTHY?

A: When people make accusations about our industry, it is likely because they are less than familiar with agriculture. We encourage FFA members to provide consumers with specific examples or stories about their agricultural pursuits – or about an agriculturist they know in the industry. Students can also share specific statistics or facts from agriculture in their region of the country. That way, we all create a foundation to support our statements.

Q: WHAT KIND OF FARMING DO YOU DO?

A: This question can intimidate FFA members who don't live on farms. Consider sharing about your supervised agricultural experience (SAE). SAEs look different all over the nation, but they all fit into the greater agricultural picture. Own your individualized experience, and don't miss an opportunity to educate others about agriculture.

WANT MORE IDEAS? Ask your FFA advisor to order the free book *Habitudes: The Art of Telling Our Story* at FFA.org/habitudes.

The National FFA Literacy and Advocacy Platform is supported by Domino's Pizza, Merck Animal Health, Monsanto and Tractor Supply Company.

TWO *in* ONE

In a coincidental turn of events, California, Connecticut and Montana each elected twin siblings to serve as state FFA officers for the 2016-17 term. California and Montana made FFA history by electing brother/sister state officers to the exact same position — the brother to president and the sister to secretary. Connecticut's twins serve as state vice president and reporter.



Andrew and Amanda Skidmore, members of the Atwater FFA, are California's first twins to be elected as state officers together.

RURAL RADIO

Be sure to listen to *FFA Today* on

Rural Radio, found on SiriusXM Channel 147. The show airs on Saturdays at 7:30 a.m. EST and Sundays at 6:30 p.m. EST.



Albert and Ashley Koenig are the first set of siblings, let alone twins, to serve on the same state officer team in Montana. They are members of the Belgrade FFA.



Desiree (left) and Hannah (right) LaFontaine are members of the Woodbury FFA. Desiree serves as vice president and Hannah serves as reporter.



MONDAY
THRU
FRIDAY 9 AM — 2 PM ET



MARKET DAY REPORT: 2015-2016 National FFA Officer Team

HIGHLIGHTING
THE NATIONAL FFA
YEAR ROUND



LISTEN TO "FFA TODAY" ON
SATURDAYS AT 7:30 AM ET AND SUNDAYS AT 6:30 PM ET



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CHANNEL 147
((SiriusXM))
SATELLITE RADIO

NATIONAL FFA OFFICER Q&A



BECOMING A NATIONAL FFA OFFICER REQUIRES A VERY HIGH LEVEL OF DEDICATION. IN THE MIDST OF YOUR COURSEWORK AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES, WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO PURSUE THIS POSITION?



David Townsend



NATIONAL FFA PRESIDENT

One of the coolest things I've enjoyed as an FFA member is hearing about the experiences

of people from across the country. We each have had unique challenges, opportunities and adventures that have developed us into the people we are today. I believe we have the ability and the responsibility to learn from those perspectives. I'm thrilled to continue to learn while I lead in this capacity.



Victoria Harris



NATIONAL FFA SECRETARY

I believe that FFA offers each and every member the opportunity to succeed and belong. Regardless

of background or ability, I know that any student can find something to excel at in FFA. I was able to find a community and discover my own potential through the blue jacket. I knew that being a national officer would allow me to share this message with FFA members and friends, and to encourage others to get involved.



DeShawn Blanding



SOUTHERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

In high school, I devoted service to the FFA, to my community and to agriculture. As a college student, I became so immersed in physics, chemistry, calculus and becoming acclimated that I lost focus of the words I centered my values around: Learning to do, doing to learn, earning to live, living to serve.

I realized that my years of service and growth in the blue jacket were not over.



Ashley Willits



EASTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

I truly believe in the difference that agricultural education and FFA makes in the lives of students. I have seen the confidence and passion that it has installed in my family, friends

and FFA members across the country. I'm so proud to serve as a catalyst for the growth and development of FFA members and to represent an industry that plays such an essential role in all of our lives.



Valerie Earley



CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT

I chose to pursue National FFA office because I want to show FFA members that there is a place in FFA and in agriculture for each person. Through speaking at conventions and camps, and visiting agricultural businesses, I am excited to have the chance to tell the

success story of the impact FFA members are making in their communities.



Trey Elizondo



WESTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

I chose to pursue this office because FFA helped me grow in ways I never imagined. I can't think of any better way to give back and to shine the light FFA gave me. I hope that through pursuing this goal I can show members how to believe in the

impossible and how to see the difference FFA can make in their lives.



**WE SALUTE
THOSE WHO,
LIKE US,
KEEP PLAYING
IN THE DIRT.**



Earning money for your FFA chapter is easy with WIX. We'll pay you \$0.25 for every WIX Filter box top you collect and turn in to your local WIX distributor. So get out there and get the word out to repair shops, truck owners, farmers and anyone with enough sense to use WIX filters. Go to wixfilters.com to learn more and download the claims form.



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Support**



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AG 101

Commodity Marketing Say What?

Selling crops and livestock for the best price is vital to a successful farm operation, but the idea of actually marketing such important goods can be daunting. The lingo alone leaves many people scratching their heads. If you're not sure whether you're in a bull or bear market or if you should be looking at fundamentals or technicals, this glossary of commonly used commodity marketing terms can help.



BASIS: The difference between futures price and cash price.

BID: An offer price made for a futures contract.

BROKER: A person paid to buy or sell commodities contracts.

CALL: Option giving the buyer a right to purchase underlying futures at a certain price.

COST OF CARRY: The cost of storing a physical commodity such as corn, soybeans or wheat for a specific period of time.

CASH MARKET: Market where commodities are traded at cash, or spot, prices.

CFTC: Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the governing body that oversees commodities trading.

CLOSE: The end of a session.

DELIVERY: The delivery of the physical commodity.

DELIVERY MONTH: The month the contract is scheduled for delivery. Also known as a contract month.

EXPIRATION: The date at which a futures contract or option expires.

FUNDAMENTALS: Supply and demand are often considered fundamental factors that cause prices to rise or fall.

FUTURES: Contracts deliverable in future months rather than immediately.

HEDGE: When investors or farmers take a long or short position to offset a competing position. Often used by growers against price moves either lower or higher.

INDEX FUTURES: Contracts based on

Bear:

A MARKET IN WHICH
PRICES ARE FALLING.



indices such as Standard & Poor's Goldman Sachs Commodity Index (GSCI).

LIMIT DOWN: The maximum amount a contract can fall in a given session, determined by the exchange.

LIMIT UP: The maximum amount a contract can rise in a given session, determined by the exchange.

LIQUIDATION: Closing of a position, whether it's short or long.

LONG POSITION: Betting that prices will rise, often by buying a contract.

MONEY MANAGER: The manager of a large amount of index or hedge funds that often take positions in futures or options.

OFFER: The offer price to sell a contract.

OPEN: The start of a trading session.

OPEN INTEREST: The number of futures contracts that have yet to separately be bought or sold.

OPEN OUTCRY: Trading futures or options in an area by traders using verbal commands or hand gestures.

OPENING PRICE: The price of a contract at the beginning of a trading session.

OPTION: A contract that allows a person to buy or sell a commodity, without obligation, at a designated price.

PIT: Where open outcry traders buy and sell futures and options.

PUT: Option giving the buyer a right to sell underlying futures at a certain price until expiration.

RANGE: The area between the bottom price and the top price in a certain time frame.

SETTLEMENT: The price at which futures contracts close after all trades are settled.

SHORT POSITION: Betting that prices will fall, often by preselling a contract.

SPECULATOR: An investor who bets that futures will rise or fall based on fundamental or technical factors, sometimes known as a speculative investor.

SPOT PRICE: The immediate cash price of a commodity.

SPREAD: The difference in price between the same commodity in varying months, separate commodities in the same month or separate commodities in varying months.

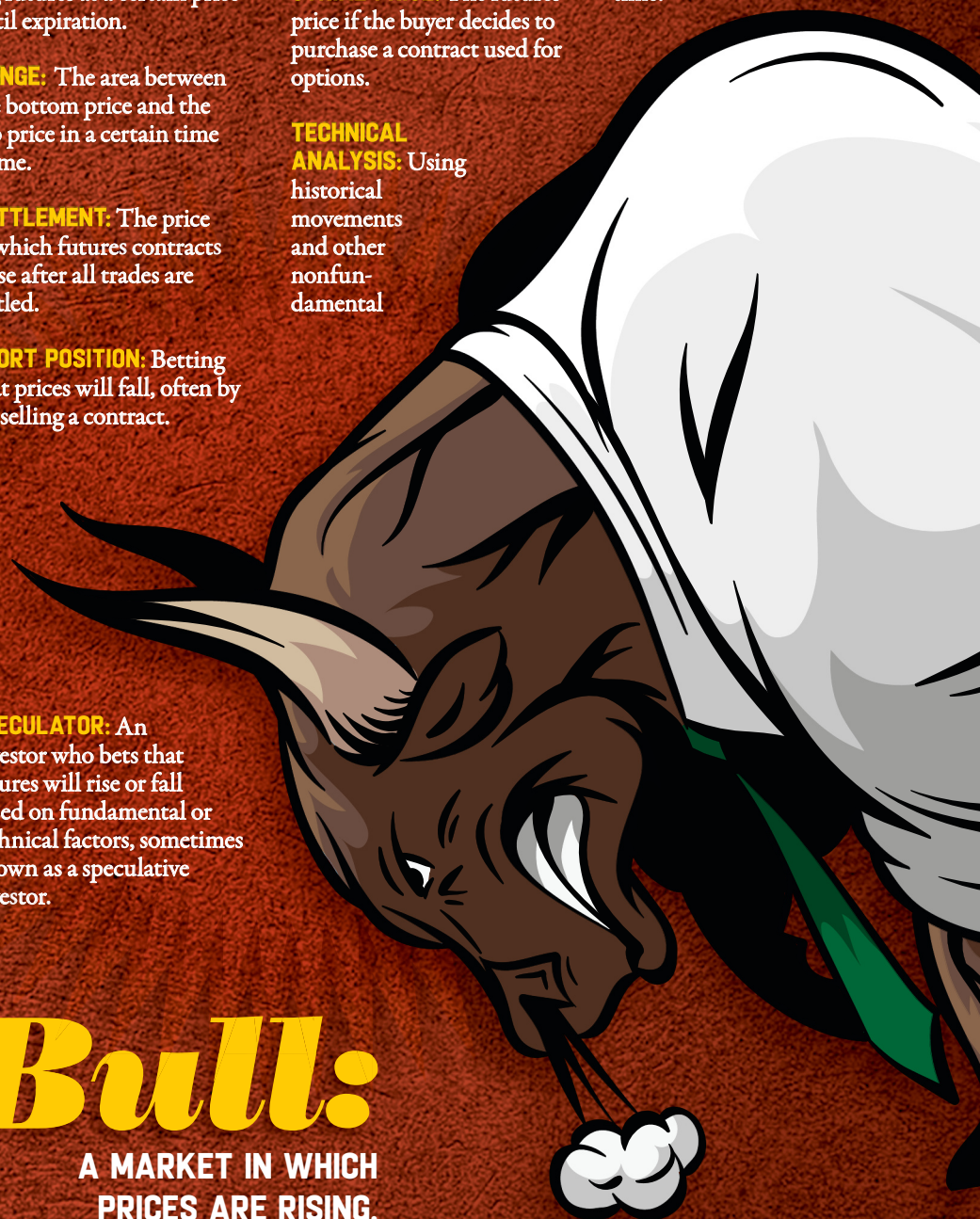
STRIKE PRICE: The futures price if the buyer decides to purchase a contract used for options.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS: Using historical movements and other nonfundamental

factors when deciding whether to purchase or to sell futures contracts.

TICK: The smallest amount a contract can move. For most agricultural futures, one tick is a quarter-cent.

VOLUME: The number of contracts traded in a given amount of time.



Bull:

A MARKET IN WHICH
PRICES ARE RISING.



FACE THE *Nation*

Ride along with the National FFA Officers as they travel to all corners of the country to strengthen the organization.

Story by Julie Woodard

Three minutes and 14 seconds. After months of mind-numbing prep typically reserved for the likes of Fortune 500 executives, that's how long it takes to transform the lives of six FFA members. Thousands of attendees wait in suspense during each National FFA Convention & Expo. Then confetti rains down on the arena stage, and six FFA members are named National FFA Officers. They turn into blue-jacketed rock stars and begin a transformational journey that started the same as all FFA members — by reciting the FFA Creed as Greenhands in an ag classroom.

Even with those humble beginnings, members-turned-national officers ooze a confidence that makes them natural-born leaders committed to the growth of the organization. It's an 89-year-long tradition that began when New Jersey's Leslie Applegate led the first national officer team in 1928.

"I'm super excited to be able to give

my time to serve an organization that has given so much to me and to so many other members in the FFA," says David Townsend. Townsend is the first FFA member from Delaware to become national president and joins National FFA Secretary Victoria Harris, Eastern Region Vice President Ashley Willits, Central Region Vice President Valerie Earley, Southern Region Vice President DeShawn Blanding and Western Region Vice President Trey Elizondo, who comprise the 2016-17 National FFA Officer team.

A YEAR OF SERVICE

During their term, the national officers will log more than 100,000 miles of travel each (including a nearly two-week-long trip to Japan to study international agricultural trade and to meet with government and agriculture officials) to represent FFA and agricultural education. On average, each national officer visits 25 states

or more and will wear at least six FFA jackets over the course of the year (blue corduroy fades fast when worn every day). Travel agendas include speeches, leadership conferences, chapter banquets, state conventions, meetings and workshops prepared for the 649,355 FFA members they will meet. The officers also speak to members via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter during a minute-long, monthly video podcast that features topics important to the officers.

They receive college scholarships and travel expenses from the organization, but the experiences the job offers provide deep meaning.

"I'm looking forward to getting to know the members," Blanding says. "I remember when I was that freshman and so shy and timid. But because someone devoted time to me and pulled me out of my comfort zone, I was able to grow and flourish as a leader. I'm looking forward to doing the same for FFA members across the nation."

The journey of a national officer is finely orchestrated by a team of FFA staff led by Coty Back, who was also a national officer in 2006. "We want the national officers to understand this isn't a year of discovering what they can get out of this opportunity," says Back. "Rather, it is a year of them pouring into others and serving the organization as a whole. If they can say or do something that helps even one member become a better person or leader, their year will have been worth it."

The educational and corporate leaders the team gets to rub shoul-

The 2016-17 National FFA Officers are (l-r) Valerie Earley, Trey Elizondo, Ashley Willits, David Townsend, Victoria Harris and DeShawn Blanding. You can get official FFA merchandise at shopffa.org.



OFFICER *focus*



ders with also make the experience worth it. National FFA Foundation partnership visits allow the officers to get an overview of a company and its industry (from Tyson Foods and John Deere to Domino's Pizza and Ford Trucks), learn about the challenges that industry faces and discover how the company is meeting those challenges. College students themselves, the officers can also receive career advice from company representatives. In turn, the officers explain the challenges FFA faces, answer questions from company representatives about FFA and agricultural education, and personally thank those who support FFA. The officers can take what they learn from these visits and communicate the messages to FFA members.

ENRICH THE FFA EXPERIENCE

The national officers also sit on the National FFA Board of Directors. They help set policies that will guide the future of the organization and promote agricultural literacy. Arguably, the most important facet of the national officer team's year is its legacy project. Legacies vary for each national officer team and have covered topics ranging from the agricultural educator shortfall to using the three-component model to #SpeakAg. Regardless of the topic, the goal is to enrich the FFA experience for generations to come.

"It really comes down to one question. How are you going to make whatever you are leading — chapter,

“Our national officers are the student voice. Like all leaders, they must envision what the ‘better’ will look like in the future and help make it so.”

– Coty Back

organization, community, group of people, etc. — better because of the work you did?” Back asks. “It is important for us, as leaders, to have a vision and an idea of how things can be improved. Our national officers are the student voice. Like all leaders, they must envision what the ‘better’ will look like in the future and help make it so. This is how leaders can leave a legacy.”

Each January, the officers and Back travel to Soderquist Leadership in Siloam Springs, Ark., for legacy brainstorming and development. They work on individual and team values, then Back explains the organization's strategic plan and values. The team then comes up with a way to contribute to the long-term plan of FFA.

ACTIVE ALUMNI

The 2015-16 National Officer Legacy Project tackled the misconception that taking off the blue jacket after high school graduation ends a member's commitment to growing leaders, strengthening agriculture and building communities.

“Soon after being elected as national officers, our team was challenged to find our place in helping FFA achieve its strategic plan of engaging our students, supporting our advisors and telling our story,” 2015-16 National FFA President Taylor McNeel says. “When we sat down to brainstorm our legacy platform, alumni came up because they support all parts of the strategic plan.”

At the time, the National FFA Alumni Association enjoyed an active roster of 60,000 members. But with about 80,000 FFA members going their separate ways after high school annually, the organization and national officers saw an opportunity for growth. They moved to make all graduating high school seniors associate alumni members for five years. “If current FFA members learn about alumni and see how they can be involved, they will become engaged after graduation,” McNeel adds.

Unfortunately, less than a third of all FFA chapters have an active alumni chapter, and many FFA members and communities have not seen the impact of an organized alumni group. That's not the case for the Dassel Cokato FFA Chapter in Minnesota. The 2015-16 officer team visited this one-teacher

program that touts more than 200 FFA members and even more agricultural education students. While this chapter is one of the most active and successful in the state, effective alumni make it possible. Teacher Erik Swatzke can focus on the classroom while his alumni members coach everything from livestock judging teams to parliamentary procedure. They also help fill out scholarship applications and prep for chapter officer elections.

"Mr. Swatzke told me, 'Without my alumni, I'd have an 80-hour workweek. The alumni make my job so much easier and their support is invaluable.' This is a prime example of just how unrestricted and appreciated the work of the alumni can be," says 2015-16 National FFA Secretary Nick Baker.

So the team created goals and an action plan to promote, recruit and retain engaged FFA alumni members.

The plan paid off. The National FFA Alumni Association typically sees a yearly membership growth of around 8 percent. After word of the legacy platform spread on social media and during the Alumni Development Conferences, 204 new alumni chapters were chartered. Along with the help of a new partnership with Alpha Gamma Rho

alumni and the activation of graduating seniors' alumni memberships, FFA Alumni membership swelled by nearly 300 percent to more than 225,000. The campaign also featured a grant from Tractor Supply Company that awarded \$500 each to four new and four existing alumni chapters.

Whether through their retiring addresses or a casual conversation with an FFA member sitting in the back of the room, the national officers inspire thousands with their work for FFA.

"I have seen members walk out of workshops with new ideas on how to better serve their communities or their friends," Back says. "I have seen members feel valued because an officer heard them crying alone in a bathroom and asked them if they were OK. I have received phone calls from advisors because a conversation an officer had with their administrators led to a tenfold increase in funding for their agricultural education department. Officers have been able to mobilize thousands of students to share their voice and to speak out about the impact of agricultural education and FFA." •

Katy Mumaw contributed to this article.

LASTING LEGACIES

Complementing one of the organization's strategic goals, the 2016-17 national officer team has selected We Are FFA as its legacy platform.

"We value making others feel included," the team said. "We have learned that once we feel like we belong, we have the confidence to pursue our passions – in and out of the jacket."

More to come on how you can play a role in this important initiative, but in the meantime, here are some tips from Coty Back on how your chapter can create a lasting legacy.

1. Select an area you can make an impact on. Be realistic – you can't fix everything, but you can work hard to improve one specific thing.
2. Create an action plan. What are your goals or expected outcomes? What are some smaller goals that will get you there? Who can help?

...better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years. –FFA Creed

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PREMIER *leadership*

LIVE TO *Serve*

The National FFA Organization strives to promote community service and volunteerism through the Living to Serve program.



in 1736, Benjamin Franklin brought together a group of 30 men, forming the Union Fire Company to prevent fires in Philadelphia. From 1914 to 1917, Agatha Christie paused her writing career to serve as a nurse for the Red Cross. In 1958, Ella Fitzgerald used her musical talents to sing a public service announcement for the March of Dimes. They came from different periods of time, different backgrounds and different cultures. However, one thing Franklin, Christie and Fitzgerald had in com-

mon was that they chose to proactively serve others and their community.

Service is one of the foundational principles of being an FFA member. There are plenty of ways the National FFA Organization supports members and chapters that wish to make a difference in the world through the FFA Living to Serve program.

FUNDING FOR CHANGE

The Living to Serve Community Development Grant Series is a funding stream that allows FFA chapters and state associations to receive grant money to address authentic

community needs.

“Service engagement is a vital component to community development,” says Michele Sullivan, National FFA Living to Serve senior team leader. “This innovative funding approach allows student and alumni FFA members to choose an area of need to be addressed as well as the duration needed to provide a positive impact and to build strong communities.”

MAKING THE MOST OF NATIONAL CONVENTION

Since 2005, the National Days of Service event has been an opportunity for

FFA members to provide a positive impact on the National FFA Convention & Expo host community by achieving goals that the community may not be able to meet due to the lack of volunteers. In 2016, 1,313 FFA members donated 4,242 hours of service for an impact valued at more than \$100,000. Members gave back to these communities by volunteering at food banks, nature trails, reading clinics and other locations.

“This is one of the most popular events during convention,” says Sullivan. “Sign up to participate early since the National Days of Service normally fill up within the first 24 hours of convention registration opening.”

Members can also participate in the Living to Serve interactive booth at the National FFA Convention & Expo. FFA members can visit stations where they experience the process of planning a successful service project. This past year, more than 4,200 members visited the booth and took the first step in making a difference in their community.

— By Bev Flatt

The Living to Serve Platform is sponsored by Domino's Pizza, Elanco Animal Health and Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Chances are, the next Benjamin Franklin is flipping through the pages of **FFA New Horizons** right now. For more information and resources, such as a Project Planning Guide, visit FFA.org/livingserve or email LTS@ffa.org.



**STUDENTS AT NORTH
NEWTON HIGH SCHOOL
IN MOROCCO, IND., USE
DRONES TO LEARN
ABOUT PRECISION
AGRICULTURE.**

TAKE *off!*

Farming isn't what it used to be and neither is agricultural education. Pop your head into an Integrated Technology in Agriculture Systems course, for example, and you'll hear teachers and students engaged in conversations about field and fertility maps, photosynthesis rates from their drone scouting or ways to program a precision planter for optimal planting rates. Students get hands-on experience with the latest in precision farming technologies — lessons that help guide their future and allow them to contribute on their farms.

Innovative agricultural curriculum like this is a reality for North Newton and South Newton high schools in Indiana. Fueled by a public-private grant of more than \$454,000, eager agriculture students have cutting-edge precision agriculture technology at their fingertips.

This is exciting stuff! Especially for students who prefer to get their noses out of a textbook and get their hands on their coursework. And it's all smiles when the day's lesson involves going outside to pilot a drone. Can you imagine? *A class that lets you go outside and fly a drone!*

MORE THAN JUST DRONES

Of course, drones garner a lot of attention wherever they go. So any class that offers the opportunity to fly drones is certain to turn a lot of heads.

These high-flying Indiana high schools bring cutting-edge precision technologies to the classroom.

Story and Photography by Mark Moore

The students enjoy learning with them, too. But Justin DeYoung and Jacob Kessler, seniors at North Newton High School and members of the North Newton FFA, say the program is much more. "I get a lot of questions about flying the drone," DeYoung says. "You quickly learn that it's only a tool that's part of a bigger precision agriculture program."

In addition to several drones added to the program, the schools have purchased two utility vehicles, as well as many components for site-specific farming. "We are using the bigger drone to map out fertility rates in the field," Kessler says. "We can fly the other drone over the field throughout the growing season to monitor growth and to look for wet spots in the field, or even to look at photosynthesis rates."

Yet, that's only a small part of the program. There's also the data gener-

ated throughout the growing season. Not unlike what some of their parents or grandparents are doing on their own fields, students are making decisions to help them farm better.

"I get a lot of questions from my grandpa about what we're learning in class," DeYoung says. "I can contribute right away because of what I'm learning."

The program is also steering students into future careers in precision agriculture. Students from South Newton are involved in internships with a dealership and cooperative, and they're putting what they learn to work.

"I go from the classroom to my internship at Peterson Ag Service where I'm using the exact same skills," says Madelyn Cobb, a senior and South Newton FFA member.

John McGraw, also a senior and South Newton FFA member, says the

CHAPTER *focus*



Ag instructor and FFA advisor Ron DeYoung works with students at North Newton High School. A grant allowed their curriculum to grow in an entirely new direction, he says.

hands-on learning experience is invaluable. “We’re not just reading about these new technologies. We get to use them every day, and that is giving me experience I can’t really get anywhere else,” he says.

Participating students also use the program as a springboard for their future education. “Precision agriculture is definitely a part of my future educational plans,” says senior Evan Stiltz from South Newton.

For FFA Alumni member Noah Poynter, drone technology is a fact of everyday farm life. A freshman at Purdue University, Poynter uses drone technology on the family farm in Putnam County, Ind. “Information we collect from drones is very valuable to a farming operation,” he says.

The rapidly expanding technology, Poynter says, will only continue to grow as a necessary tool. “Multiple types of maps can be made from one

drone flight, two of the most popular being NDVI (normalized difference vegetation index) and topography maps,” he says. “Drones are showing their value in nearly every aspect of

“Drones are showing their value in nearly every aspect of today’s agriculture.”

– Noah Poynter

today’s agriculture. This unique experience provided to these students will be very beneficial as the technology becomes even more powerful.”

FUNDING THE FUTURE

The grant that Newton schools received is part of a program implemented by the Indiana Works Councils, which allocated \$4.3 million to schools throughout the state for its innovative career and technical education (CTE) curriculums. Grants are designed to encourage innovative and collaborative career and technical training opportunities to the state’s high school students.

Once Newton school administrators learned about the program, the brainstorming began. “We started to think about how we could leverage our agricultural education program and design something that would allow us to benefit from the grant,” says Darrell Allen, ag instructor at South

DRONE OPERATOR? DATA ANALYST? PRECISION AG SPECIALIST?

NO MATTER WHAT YOUR TALENTS ARE, THERE'S LIKELY A CAREER OPPORTUNITY WITH SKILLS ROOTED IN PRECISION AG EDUCATION. FIND YOUR FUTURE IN AGRICULTURE AT



Newton High School in Kentland. "The idea of making drones a part of our program came up, and we went to work." Together, the two schools developed a comprehensive program that incorporated the latest in precision agriculture technology.

Once they developed the program's framework, the real work began: securing the grant. The grant matched local funds up to three to one, but first the schools needed to secure initial local investments. So they approached their county administrators. "That's not an easy task, given the tight budgets," Allen says. "We expected a few thousand dollars to help us move forward with the grant process. But when the county administrators heard our proposal, they provided us with \$115,000 to move ahead. We were floored."

Their dedication paid off. The schools were awarded the full grant match in 2015, turning that initial seed money into a full \$445,000 that is being shared equally between the two schools. In addition to the precision agricultural program, future curricula will include agritourism and aquaponics.

"The grant has allowed our program to grow in an entirely new direction," explains Ron DeYoung, ag instructor at North Newton High School in Morocco. "It's exciting to be able to offer our students the latest in agricultural technology that will provide them educational experiences and will benefit them far into the future."

The first year of the program got off to a fast start when three students from

South Newton participated in the agBOT Challenge, a yearly competition aimed at students to help develop the software and machinery that is in agriculture's future. The students used information gathered from the new curriculum to fabricate an unmanned crop seeder. That same seeder now sits at South Newton and is instrumental as students further incorporate its functions into their studies.

EXPANDING THE PROGRAM

When the staff and administrators first met to develop the program, they focused on how it could be devised so other schools could replicate it, even with a smaller budget. "Our original idea had us purchasing a larger tractor to use in the program," Allen says. "But then we thought that, to reach a broader audience, we needed to ensure the program could be repeated." So, the schools purchased smaller equipment that would likely fit into more budgets.

"We've received calls from around the country asking about the program," Allen says. "We hope the success we've seen will continue in other schools." •

FOLLOW THE FAA RULES

It's important to point out that drones aren't toys that you fly around in your living room.

They are complex vehicles that come with their own set of rules and regulations from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). A great resource is

knowbeforeyoufly.org, a website that provides detailed information on drone use. Full FAA rules and regulations are available at **faa.gov**. Here are four items that are particularly important to know.

1 You don't have to be a pilot to fly a drone recreationally, but you do need a remote pilot airman certificate for commercial use. (Part 107 of the FAA Small Unmanned Aircraft Regulations outlines additional rules for commercial drone use.)

2 You may not fly a drone higher than 400 feet, and it must remain below any surrounding obstacles when possible.

3 You must keep the drone away from manned aircraft.

4 You must keep the drone in your line of sight.

WATCH ONLINE!

To learn more about the education North Newton and South Newton's grant is providing, as well as career opportunities in the industry, check out our video at <http://bit.ly/takeoffnewton>.

A full-page photograph of Corey Flournoy, a Black man with a shaved head and a goatee, wearing a teal V-neck sweater and dark jeans. He is standing in a hydroponic greenhouse, with his hands in his pockets. In the background, there are large blue water tanks and rows of green leafy plants growing in white trays. The lighting is bright and even.

Corey Flournoy at the
Chicago High School for
Agricultural Sciences.

SERENDIPITOUS Success

The unexpected story of a youth from Chicago who finds his niche in FFA, helps establish a culture of diversity and cultivates a thriving career as an alumnus.

Story by Jessica Walker Boehm • Photography by Cory Hall

Unlike many National FFA Organization members, Chicago, Ill., native Corey Flournoy didn't grow up on a family farm and had no agricultural experience or knowledge before joining the organization. Instead, he became involved in FFA by chance. He applied to several highly competitive magnet high schools in the Chicago Public Schools system, and he was accepted by the one he knew the least about, the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences (CHSAS).

"CHSAS is unique in that every student who attends automatically becomes an FFA member," Flournoy says. "I didn't necessarily have a choice in joining."

Flournoy fell hard and fast for FFA. He attended the 1988 National FFA Convention during his freshman year

and realized he wanted to grow his presence in the organization.

"I remember being in awe at how massive the National FFA Convention was," Flournoy says. "It was beyond what I imagined, and I just kept thinking how cool it would be to become a national officer and do what they do. At that point, I was only 14 years old, and I didn't know what it would take to get to that point — it was just a dream, and it never went away."

He wasted no time making that dream a reality.

THE PATH TO PRESIDENT

As a freshman, Flournoy began competing in career development events, and he attended FFA Leadership Camp. He also became his freshman class vice president. Because FFA doubled as student council at CHSAS, he was the Greenhand vice

president that year, too. During the summer, he completed his supervised agricultural experience (SAE) program by spending four weeks living and working on a family farm in central Illinois.

"Working on that corn and soybean farm was my first real experience with production agriculture," Flournoy says. "It was challenging and a huge culture shock for me. I grew up in the big city, and this was a small rural town — but I did it. The experience helped me understand hard work, and I continue to have great respect for those who work in production agriculture, even though that path wasn't right for me."

During his sophomore year, Flournoy became class president, and the following year, he was the junior class vice president, as well as the first African-American FFA section vice president in Illinois. As a senior, he was

ALUMNI *focus*

elected FFA section president, which was considered a minor state office. He was the first African-American to hold that position in Illinois, too.

“I think young people, particularly minorities and those living in major cities, are looking for a place to belong,” Flournoy says. “I was just fortunate that place was FFA.”

After graduating from CHSAS in 1992, Flournoy delayed college for a year to serve as the Illinois FFA vice president, an office that required him to visit chapters throughout the state.

“I had a wonderful opportunity to get to know FFA members across Illinois,” Flournoy says. “I met some great people whom I’m still in touch with today.”

DIVERSE INAUGURATION

Following his year as a state officer, Flournoy began pursuing a degree in agricultural and consumer economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. However, his involvement with FFA was far from finished. Flournoy became the

first African-American national FFA president as a UI sophomore in 1994, a goal he says he spent several months preparing to achieve.

“I had planned out how I was going to be elected as a national officer,” Flournoy says. “I did my research and learned as much as I could about the process, and I was completely focused on making it happen. I was driven. I remember getting to Kansas City, Mo., where the National FFA Convention was held, and going to my interviews. When I was finished, I felt satisfied. I knew I had done my best. I put the time in and felt like, ‘Whatever the outcome, God’s will be done.’”

Flournoy, who was also the first national FFA president to come from an urban area, calls the year “life changing,” and he says it also helped bring change to the entire National FFA Organization. At the time, fewer than 5 percent of its members were African-American, which made Flournoy’s election particularly noteworthy and garnered attention from major news outlets like *The New York Times* and *USA Today*. He was also featured on *CBS This Morning*, and comedian Dennis Miller mentioned him during his weekly HBO talk show.

“I don’t think any of us were prepared for what happened after I was elected,” he says. “We weren’t expecting that kind of reaction; it was huge.”

In addition, Flournoy says he used his time as national FFA president to



Flournoy at Foote, Cone & Belding in Chicago.

“FFA changed my life,” he says. “It has impacted who I am, how I carry myself and my values.”

Do your blue jackets still fit?

YES, THEY STILL FIT!
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show that the organization wasn't just for people who were interested in growing crops or raising livestock.

"I was the poster child for why FFA was no longer called Future Farmers of America," he says. "I wanted people to understand that agriculture is a broad industry that involves many different components, so I did my best to communicate that message."

LIVING A LEGACY

Flournoy returned to UI in 1996, and the same year, he and another former national officer, Raquel Lacey Nelson, cofounded Creative Outreach, a leadership development consulting partnership that still exists today. While still in college, the pair shared diversity and leadership workshops with FFA chapters across Illinois and the U.S., and Flournoy also traveled around the country for FFA-related speaking engagements.

After graduating from UI in 1998, Flournoy briefly left the agriculture field to work as an account executive at Chicago-based advertising agency Leo Burnett Worldwide. In 2003, he entered Michigan State University's graduate program in agricultural and extension education, during which he researched diversity within agricultural education. After graduation in 2006, he returned to UI to teach courses in agricultural leadership and education.

Flournoy's next role was as the founding director of the Illinois Center for Urban Agricultural Education in 2011, where he helped introduce Chicago high school students to agriculture and possible career opportunities in the industry.

Today, Flournoy works as the global vice president, associate director for global talent development at Foote, Cone & Belding, which is a



Flournoy and the
1994-95 National
FFA Officers.

New York-based marketing communications agency.

Although he is no longer directly employed in agriculture, Flournoy is an FFA lifetime alumni member and still makes time to speak at FFA leadership conferences and to lead agriculture-related workshops each year. He is a keynote speaker for various agriculture organizations when his schedule allows. He says he also makes a point to personally reach out to minority leaders in FFA, offering them encouragement and pieces of advice he has picked up along the way.

"When you're a minority in a

leadership position, all eyes are on you," Flournoy says. "If you don't think you fit in, it's a good opportunity for you to create your own space. You don't have to be like anyone else; you can be the pioneer."

Additionally, Flournoy says he still uses the lessons he learned in FFA on a regular basis, and he believes his participation in the organization helped him find success as an adult.

"FFA changed my life," he says. "It has impacted who I am, how I carry myself and my values. I never would have imagined that an organization I joined back in the late '80s would have such a long-lasting impact on my life." •

WE ARE FFA

The National FFA Organization promotes the appreciation of diversity through inclusiveness with the We Are FFA platform, which was unveiled at the 2013 National FFA Convention & Expo in Louisville, Ky.

Members are encouraged to embrace the many different kinds of people involved in the organization by celebrating what they have in common with one another rather than focusing on their differences. Essentially, the message is We all wear the blue jacket. We Are FFA!

Although FFA members are asked to uphold the platform in their respective chapters on a daily basis, they can also

show their support at national conventions. A We Are FFA booth features interactive activities that give members an opportunity to express and reflect on what diversity and inclusion in FFA means to them while connecting with others and, ideally, making new friends in the process. Members can also promote the initiative by purchasing the annual tee, which features We Are FFA at shopffa.org.

Visit FFA.org/resources/we-are-ffa to learn more about the We Are FFA platform and how members are embracing it. Or, search social media using the hashtag #WeAreFFA.



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WRITE THE RIGHT *Resume*

Here's how to use premier leadership, personal growth and career success to build a great resume.

Twenty years ago, a job seeker would knock on doors, drop off an application and patiently wait by the phone to determine if he or she would move to the next round of consideration. The process today looks incredibly different. Yet, the typical resume has remained the same. How do you break through the clutter and stand out? The National FFA Organization and **AgCareers.com** have provided some insights into creating a 21st-century resume and landing your college or career dreams.

MAINTAIN THE MUST-HAVES

Many traditional resume-writing rules are being broken, but there are a few basics that transcend the trends.

- **Use headlines** such as Education and Work Experience to allow the employer to organize your experience.
- **Organize your resume** in the order the events occurred to help reviewers understand a time line.
- **Write in bullet points.** Since reviewers may read through hundreds of resumes, this lets them read more of your resume in a shorter amount of time.
- **Incorporate the soft skills** you have developed through your ag experiences, such as leadership, communication, teamwork and more.
- **Showcase** how you communicate effectively, collaborate with others and solve problems.

TACKLE TECHNOLOGY

Incorporating technology into a resume is a recent trend. Many resumes are submitted electronically through career websites or via email, which provides a great opportunity to add hyperlinks. FFA members who have LinkedIn profiles (a type of professional social media network) can link to their profile in the contact information of their resume. Members who keep an online portfolio, maintain a blog or have digital links to newspaper articles of their work can link to these examples.



“I have seen resumes with links to photography portfolios, SAE (supervised agricultural experience) profiles and even QR codes to show examples of work FFA members have created,” says Ashley Collins, the education and marketing manager for **AgCareers.com**. “Links on resumes really make a resume stand out and allow me to get personally involved in the research on the candidate.”

RELY ON RESOURCES

The FFA Resume Generator© is a tool any member (student or alumni) can use through My Journey on **FFA.org** to get a jump start on creating a great resume. The resume generator will ask questions about your education, work experience and FFA participation. After completing the form, the generator will export your resume in a variety of formats, including a PDF or Microsoft Word document that is ready for immediate use. Once your resume has been generated, share it with other student and alumni members to receive feedback.

If you need help determining how to bolster your resume, check out My Journey (**FFA.org/my-journey**).

Videos, quizzes and other activities can help you learn more about yourself and the opportunities available to you. Finally, you can use this platform to build your own career success and plan for your future career goals.

– By Bev Flatt

Still not sure what your future career will be? You can discover 235 career opportunities in agriculture by visiting AgExplorer.com, the career exploration resource from FFA.

FFA *in the* USA

THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION HAS STATE ASSOCIATIONS AND LOCAL CHAPTERS IN ALL 50 STATES, PUERTO RICO AND THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS. HERE ARE SOME OF THE IMPORTANT AND EXCITING THINGS HAPPENING IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. — Compiled by Julie Woodard

ALABAMA

Colbert County FFA Chapter hosts an annual Easter egg hunt for local pre-K and special-needs students. Each year it hides a couple of thousand eggs.

ALASKA

The Alaska FFA Association was recently named the winner of the 2016 Hunger Heroes Challenge. More than 150 members volunteered 33,919 hours and donated more than 35,000 meals.

ARIZONA

The Gila Ridge FFA Chapter hosts an annual Cotton Ball Dance at a local cotton gin to support Crossroads Mission, a charity for the homeless.

ARKANSAS

Members of the Blytheville FFA Chapter designed an FFA emblem with Christmas lights so it could shine bright at the annual Lights of the Delta festival.

CALIFORNIA

Every spring, the Sacramento Leadership Experience hosts the association's top senior students. They debate at the state Capitol and learn to advocate for agricultural issues.

COLORADO

The Lone Star FFA Chapter sends an American flag overseas each year and asks troops to fly it, take a picture with it and send it back. They also send letters and care packages.

CONNECTICUT

Late last year, the Ledyard FFA Chapter organized a How to Cook Your Meat workshop. The event was free to the public thanks to an FFA grant.

DELAWARE

Smyrna FFA organizes a statewide Bunny Hop for Hunger, held the last school day before spring break, as a fundraiser for the Delaware Food Bank.

FLORIDA

At the Florida Strawberry Festival, held each March, Florida FFA members and the Tama County (Iowa) Pork Producers promote the pork industry to nearly 700,000 festival attendees.

GEORGIA

The Georgia FFA Foundation is hosting its 10th Annual Blue and Gold Gala to raise funds that impact the lives of over 41,000 FFA members in Georgia.

HAWAII

FFA members continually learn about the history of their islands and how early Hawaiians were able to farm sustainably.

IDAHO

The Madison FFA Chapter increases agricultural literacy and awareness by hosting an annual Ag Expo. Students learn about modern farming practices and how they impact their lives.

ILLINOIS

The Waterloo FFA Chapter created the Kiss the Goat

fundraiser to help cover medical costs for a high school employee battling cancer. For every \$500 raised, an administration member had to kiss a goat. Over \$1,500 was raised.

INDIANA

Indiana FFA is partnering with Heifer International to launch its second annual Read to Feed service project to promote literacy while sending livestock to countries across the globe.

KANSAS

The Mission Valley FFA members enrolled in CASE Ag Power and Technology (APT) are competing in a regional Battle Bots contest.

KENTUCKY

The Harrison County FFA Chapter used National FFA grants to host Living to Serve – Meals of Hope. The group packed over 20,000 meals and raised over \$5,000 for those in need.

LOUISIANA

The devastation caused by recent flooding in Louisiana has prompted FFA members from across the state to lend a helping hand to those affected in their communities.

MAINE



Members at the Mars Hill FFA Chapter plant and harvest their own potatoes to sell to McCain Foods as a yearly chapter fundraiser.

MARYLAND

The North Harford FFA Chapter cares for various livestock and equine. It boasts a student swine-leasing program and a fistulated cow that is used with its prevet program.

MASSACHUSETTS

In order to save a declining monarch butterfly population, students from Bristol County Agricultural High School planted eight different species of plants in the butterfly garden at the Buttonwood Park and Zoo.

MICHIGAN

Members from across Michigan are collecting pop tabs to benefit children in the Ronald McDonald House for a service project.

MINNESOTA

The Grand Rapids FFA Chapter has advocated for unique styles of agriculture during Tree Planting Day and Forestry Day, when the chapter plants over 4,000 trees with fourth-graders.

MISSISSIPPI

On April 8, FFA members from all across the state will partner with Habitat for Humanity in a statewide Day of Service. Members will help build homes, pick

39 YEARS

How long Iowa's North Polk FFA Chapter has managed the Avenue of Breeds at the Iowa State Fair and cared for 125 animals from 55 different breeds.

produce and volunteer at community centers.

MISSOURI

Members can tune in to a 16-week radio show called “The Living to Serve Network,” hosted by Missouri state FFA officers. Each episode has motivational segments and agricultural topics.

MONTANA

Conrad FFA Alumni members host a statewide seminar for students interested in agronomy and mechanics. This activity has been hosted annually for more than 20 years.

NEBRASKA

Nebraska FFA held a two-day P2C (Pathways to Careers) conference. FFA members across the state attended interactive sessions from 100 agricultural business and industry leaders.

NEVADA

FFA members in the Battle Mountain Chapter competed with their classes to gather hygiene products to support domestic violence victims and the homeless in their community.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

In December, New Hampshire FFA members worked with the Blue Ocean Society to help clean up Jenness Beach in Rye.

NEW JERSEY

The New Jersey FFA Alumni hosted its annual 5K to promote healthy lifestyles and raised more than \$1,500 to support student leadership opportunities and scholarships.

NEW MEXICO

Each February, members participate in FFA Day at the Roundhouse. They visit the state Legislature to advocate for agriculture and

agricultural education.

NEW YORK

New York’s FFA Camp Oswegatchie hosted a week-long outdoor sports and winter survival camp Feb. 19-24 for children of active duty, reservist or veteran military personnel.

NORTH CAROLINA

The Asheboro Zoo FFA Chapter is the only FFA chapter headquartered at a zoo. FFA members learn in the classroom and practice in the zoo.

NORTH DAKOTA

In late March, hundreds of FFA members gather in Minot for the state contest of winter CDEs that include agricultural sales, livestock evaluation and agronomy.

OHIO

Ohio FFA members are defining their personal brands by using practices learned at the first-ever Ohio FFA Conference on Character.

OKLAHOMA

Members from across the state are working to meet a goal of collecting enough donated livestock projects to produce 1 million protein sticks for the Food For Kids Backpack programs.

OREGON  
Students at Yamhill-Carlton High School get a unique opportunity to learn about the wine industry on their home turf. These students are the first in the nation to practice in an on-campus vineyard.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania FFA Alumni host the annual First Year Member Jacket Campaign. At the 2017 Pennsylvania Farm Show, the alumni will give 462 jackets to deserving freshmen FFA members.

RHODE ISLAND

State officers have been busy visiting chapters, leading a Chapter Officer Leadership Workshop and promoting FFA in their communities. The annual Souper Supper and Pound Auction were successful winter events.

SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina FFA holds a ceremony every spring to donate plants to the South Carolina State House to show gratitude for the support the state gives to FFA and agricultural education.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Every year, the McCook Central FFA sets up a food stand at a local equipment dealer’s auction. This year, a blizzard didn’t stop them from feeding customers.

TENNESSEE

This fall, members came together from across the state to help provide water, food and clothes to those suffering from the recent Gatlinburg wildfire tragedy.

TEXAS

The Texas FFA has placed the FFA experience into members’ hands through an innovative MYTEXASFFA website and app.

UTAH

Many chapters from across Utah will help the Farm Bureau with Farm Field Days, where second-graders come to the farm to learn about agriculture.

VERMONT

Each May, Vergennes Union FFA hosts its Ag Day program. Members drive tractors and bring animals to school to introduce students to FFA and agriculture.

VIRGINIA

Virginia FFA members of the Admiral Byrd FFA Chapter visited Arlington

National Cemetery during the holiday season to lay wreaths on the tombstones of our country’s veterans.

WASHINGTON

In 2016, Washington FFA was proud to have two National Chapter Award Program champions — Model of Excellence (Yelm FFA) and Model of Innovation (Omak FFA) — as well as the National FFA Talent Champion Michela Walker (Decatur FFA)!



WEST VIRGINIA

West Virginia currently has 24 FFA programs with access to meats labs. This makes it possible for students to participate in ham, bacon and egg shows that are unique to the state.

WISCONSIN

FFA chapters across Wisconsin are partnering with Easter Seals to collect items for a clothing drive, with a goal of collecting over 20,000 pounds of clothes.

WYOMING

Cheyenne Frontier FFA live-streams its sow farrowing process. It’s gained a huge online following, and the students now are managers of the online and on-site farrowing process.

PUERTO RICO

Each spring, Puerto Rico FFA members are encouraged to assist the Guajataca Leadership Camp, where they interact with nature and get to know each other.



What I KNOW

Easton CORBIN

*The country music star talks with **FFA New Horizons** about the lessons he learned as an FFA member, the values that drive him today and the pride he holds as an alumnus.*

NH: YOU WERE FIRST AN FFA MEMBER IN TRENTON, FLA., WHERE YOUR GRANDPARENTS HAD A FARM. DESCRIBE YOUR FFA INVOLVEMENT.

EC: I joined FFA in middle school and was a member through high school. I showed cattle and did some livestock and crop judging. It was a really great experience.

NH: BEFORE YOU WENT TO NASHVILLE, YOU WENT TO COLLEGE. HOW DID FFA HELP PREPARE YOU?

EC: Through my agricultural studies in high school, I got a scholarship to the University of Florida. I have a degree in food and resource economics, specialized in agribusiness marketing and management. I always had my sights on music — it is something in my heart — but I also recognized that the music business is very competitive. So I went to college to have something to fall back on, and I knew earning my degree would help me understand business and how it works.

“FFA IS A GREAT ORGANIZATION THAT TEACHES LEADERSHIP, PEOPLE SKILLS AND CHARACTER.”

NH: HOW HAS YOUR FFA EDUCATION HELPED YOUR CAREER AS A COUNTRY STAR?

EC: Not only am I an entertainer, but I am also a small business owner who employs a band and crew. In FFA, you learn about responsibility and business through record keeping and other project work. You also learn to lead, to speak in public and to articulate what you want to communicate. It all translates to my career today.

NH: DESCRIBE OTHER IMPORTANT LIFE SKILLS THAT FFA MEMBERS CAN BRING TO ADULTHOOD.

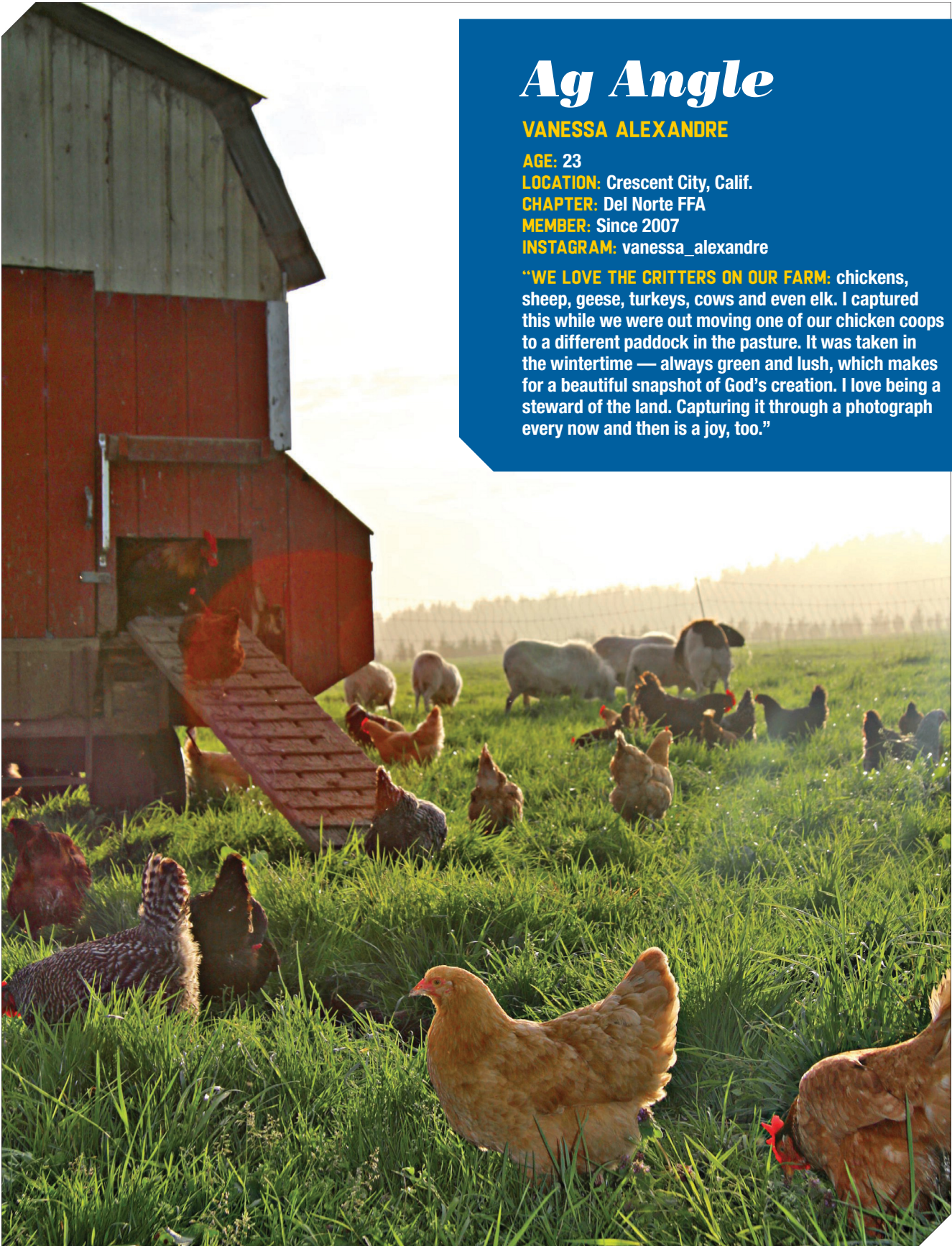
EC: FFA is a great organization that teaches leadership, people skills and character. Young people who go through the organization learn to be respectful, hardworking adults.

NH: YOU HAVE SUPPORTED THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION AS AN ENTERTAINER AND A MENTOR. WHY SHOULD ALUMNI REMAIN INVOLVED?

EC: It is important to be a positive role model in young peoples' lives, to encourage and inspire them to do their best. FFA helps you learn that you can be anything you want to be, but you have to work for it.

For tour dates and other information about Corbin, visit eastoncorbin.com.

— By Karen Bernick



Ag Angle

VANESSA ALEXANDRE

AGE: 23

LOCATION: Crescent City, Calif.

CHAPTER: Del Norte FFA

MEMBER: Since 2007

INSTAGRAM: [vanessa_alexandre](#)

"WE LOVE THE CRITTERS ON OUR FARM: chickens, sheep, geese, turkeys, cows and even elk. I captured this while we were out moving one of our chicken coops to a different paddock in the pasture. It was taken in the wintertime — always green and lush, which makes for a beautiful snapshot of God's creation. I love being a steward of the land. Capturing it through a photograph every now and then is a joy, too."

✿ **SHARE YOUR AG ANGLE WITH US!** It's as simple as completing the submission form at FFANewHorizons.org/submit-your-story/. The editors will review all entries and publish one in each issue of *FFA New Horizons*. All material submitted becomes the property of the National FFA Organization. If your idea is used, you give FFA the right to use it in any manner.

YOU ARE FFA ALUMNI

Whether you wore the blue jacket or not, being an engaged FFA Alumni member is easy and for everyone!

Attend a **FREE** 2017 Regional Development Conference

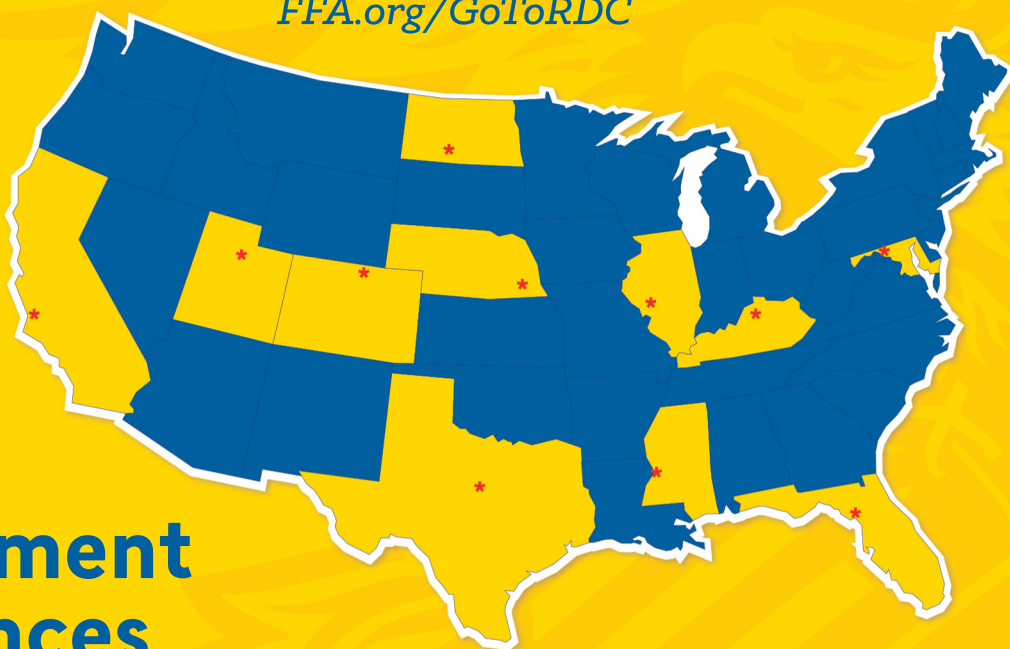
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For more information on the National FFA Alumni Association, visit FFA.org/alumni or email alumni@ffa.org.