



NEW

Summer 2017

HORIZONS

FFANEWHORIZONS.ORG

**MADISON TAYLOR IS
ON A MISSION TO
TEACH AG WORLDWIDE
& YOU CAN, TOO!**

GO GLOBAL

**STRENGTH
IN NUMBERS**

**THE POWER OF
AN ENGAGED
ALUMNI CHAPTER**

**OHIO CHAPTER HONORS
FALLEN HEROES**

**AT ARLINGTON
NATIONAL CEMETERY**



DID YOU KNOW



Look what the **National FFA Foundation** did for local members/chapters in **2016!**

\$145,000

**SUPERVISED AGRICULTURAL
EXPERIENCE GRANTS**
AWARDED TO **145**
FFA MEMBERS IN **34** STATES



\$2.5 M+

GIVEN DIRECTLY TO **STATES**
AND **LOCAL CHAPTERS**

1,820

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



1,268

JACKETS GIFTED TO
FFA MEMBERS THROUGH
GIVE THE GIFT OF BLUE



\$2,657,001

AWARDED IN **SCHOLARSHIPS**

\$731,156

LIVING TO SERVE GRANTS
AWARDED TO **734** CHAPTERS



4,341,858

MEALS DONATED

2,022,000

VOLUNTEER HOURS



Visit **FFA.org/2016impact** and watch a video
showing how our supporters' gifts impact FFA
members.

Thank you to our generous **donors and sponsors** for making all of this possible for FFA members!

THE PRODUCT OF YOUR TOIL

One of the many things that impresses me about FFA is the drive inside each and every one of you. Maybe it's the growing-up-on-a-farm thing some of you experience. Work just has to get done. Maybe it's your youthfulness. Your energy forces the rest of us to keep up. It's probably a combination of the two and more, but it's the drive that you develop as young FFA members and the product of your toil that leave me slack-jawed – in the best possible way. When you develop an interest or see a need, you go do something about it. I interact with FFA student and alumni members and advisors often, and the stories I hear are so impressive.



Stories like that of Madison Taylor, a junior studying agricultural education at the University of Minnesota. In "Global Horizons," page 10, you'll learn how Taylor's love of agriculture developed and how she has used that passion to serve as a chapter president and alumni member, receive an American FFA Degree, teach about FFA and agriculture in Uganda and more.

"Lift 'Em Up!," page 20, details the work of the Washington County FFA Alumni Chapter in Kansas, which was honored by the National FFA Alumni Association as 2016's Outstanding FFA Alumni Chapter. The group assists with fundraising efforts, chaperones events and so much more to ensure that students have the best possible FFA experiences.

I hope you will take some time to read through this issue and learn about the important, inspiring and fun work FFA members, chapters and the National FFA Organization are doing.

Have a great summer!

Justin Davey

Justin Davey
Editor, *FFA New Horizons*
ffanewhorizons@meredith.com

**ARE YOU ENJOYING THE NEW
FFA NEW HORIZONS? I'D LOVE TO
HEAR YOUR FEEDBACK RELATED TO
THE MAGAZINE. PLEASE EMAIL ME AT
FFANEWHORIZONS@MEREDITH.COM.**

CONTENTS

FEATURES

10 GLOBAL HORIZONS

Madison Taylor's passion for agricultural education was planted by FFA and has taken her around the world – and she's only getting started.

16 #AGITFORWARD

California's San Luis Obispo FFA created a viral campaign to help FFA chapters understand the diversity of agriculture in the U.S.

20 LIFT 'EM UP!

The Washington County FFA Alumni Chapter in Kansas proves there is strength in numbers, and FFA doesn't have to end when school does.

DEPARTMENTS

2 THE FEED

Quick reads about community service efforts, officer fun facts and more.

6 NATIONAL FFA OFFICER Q&A

Learn why the officers think it's important to have a global mind-set.

8 AG 101

One way soybeans travel from the farm to the consumer.

15 PREMIER LEADERSHIP

Ohio FFA members serve those resting at Arlington National Cemetery.

25 CAREER SUCCESS

How to use **AgExplorer.FFA.org** to research careers and prepare for your future.

26 FFA IN THE USA

Updates from chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

28 WHAT I KNOW

Ray Starling on his FFA roots and his new job at the White House.

29 AG ANGLE

An FFA member in Missouri shares a heartfelt parting shot.

Summer 2017
Volume 65, Number 4

FFA COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER Julie Woodard
EDITOR Justin Davey
CREATIVE DIRECTOR Matt Strelecki
COPY EDITORS Janis Gandy, Paula Barbour
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT Diana Weesner
EXECUTIVE ACCOUNT DIRECTOR Doug Stark

2016-17 National FFA Officers

PRESIDENT David Townsend, DE
SECRETARY Victoria Harris, FL
EASTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT Ashley Willits, NY
CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT Valerie Earley, MN
SOUTHERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT DeShawn Blanding, SC
WESTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT Trey Elizondo, TX

National FFA Staff

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Mark Poeschl
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER Joshua Bledsoe
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER David Schapker
PRESIDENT, NATIONAL FFA FOUNDATION Molly Ball

National FFA Board of Directors

CHAIR, NATIONAL ADVISOR/USDE Steve A. Brown
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE SECRETARY/USDE Sherene Donaldson
NATIONAL TREASURER Nancy Trivette, NJ
STATE SUPERVISOR Jacob Davis, AL
STATE SUPERVISOR William (Buddy) Deimler, UT
STATE SUPERVISOR Jason Hughes, WV
STATE SUPERVISOR Kurt Dillon, KS
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY/USDE Vacant
TEACHER/USDE Matthew Eddy, IA
TEACHER EDUCATOR/USDE Jonathan Ulmer, KS
INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE/USDE Vacant

Subscription Information

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

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

Copyright ©2017 by the National FFA Organization.

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.

BRIDGING *Horizons*

THE NATIONAL AGRABILITY PROJECT HELPS FFA CHAPTERS ENHANCE INDEPENDENCE AND PROMOTE SUCCESS FOR PEOPLE FACING PHYSICAL DISABILITY CHALLENGES.

When Evan Exmeyer joined Indiana's North Miami FFA Chapter, his fellow members noticed it was difficult for him to navigate his wheelchair on unpaved surfaces around his family's farm or at FFA events. So they brainstormed a way for Exmeyer, who has cerebral palsy, to gain better access in his rural surroundings.

After researching options, North Miami FFA members purchased and modified a John Deere utility vehicle. They raised more than \$20,000 to buy the vehicle and materials, and they enlisted community members to help adapt it with a pivot lift so Exmeyer could ride in the front seat.

"It has allowed him to be a part of what is going on at the farm and school in ways he never could before," says Exmeyer's mom, Kathy.

The Ex Project earned the North



Evan Exmeyer with community members.

Miami FFA first prize and \$600 in the Bridging Horizons Community Service Contest facilitated by Indiana AgrAbility and sponsored by DuPont Pioneer and Indiana FFA. The prize money funded a scholarship to help the chapter pay for member jackets, trips and more.

The Bridging Horizons program epitomizes the importance of Living to Serve. For information about the Community Service Contest, visit agrability.org or contact your state FFA office. Visit FFA.org/LivingtoServe for more ideas on how to put your leadership into action and service funding opportunities.

— By Karen Bernick

Dude. BE NICE.

“MY HOPE IS THAT WHEN KIDS LEAVE MY BUILDING, THEY WILL REMEMBER THAT I TAUGHT THEM HOW TO SERVE PEOPLE.”

— SETH REEVES

Last fall, Seth Reeves, the Latta FFA advisor and alumni member from Oklahoma, set out with his students to make a difference in their community through the Dude. Be Nice. campaign, which aims to inspire people to build a positive community by recognizing a person or group in a fun, creative and meaningful way. During the weeklong campaign, students and staff spread messages of kindness and positivity around the school with more than 30 posters. The school held a surprise assembly on the last day of the project to recognize maintenance worker Randy Ellison for his dedication to the Latta school district.

Latta FFA Reporter Kalynn Williams notes that their efforts have created a kinder, more positive mood at school. "There has been a lingering atmosphere of both gratitude for all who do their part to serve the Latta community and excitement for the years of Dude. Be Nice. projects to come," she says.

Adds Reeves, "My hope is that when kids leave my building, they will remember that I taught them how to serve people."

CALENDAR

June:

NATIONAL DAIRY MONTH

Beat the heat and celebrate the dairy industry with some ice cream.

June:

MINI-GRANT

APPLICATION OPENS

Need \$400 for a day of service project? Visit FFA.org/LivingtoServe.

June 15:

YEARLONG GRANT

APPLICATION DUE

Apply for \$3,000 for a larger service-learning project. Visit FFA.org/LivingtoServe.

June 16-17:

REGION TWO (A) ALUMNI REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Visit FFA.org/gotordc to register for a free RDC in Fort Collins, Colo. Registration is open.

July 1:

APPLICATION DUE FOR NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARDS

Complete an application at FFA.org/AlumniAwards for a chance to be recognized for your contributions to state and local FFA chapters.

July 28-29:

REGION FIVE (A) ALUMNI REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Registration opens June 5 for this RDC in Williston, Fla. Visit FFA.org/gotordc for more information.

August:

FIRST SEMESTER GRANT APPLICATION OPENS

Apply for \$1,200 to fund a semester-long project. Visit FFA.org/LivingtoServe.

#FFAALUMNI *Get Social*



Benson Shum Art

Like This Page · Jan. 14

Painting for auction at the Washington State FFA specialty license plate event at the governor's mansion! Washington FFA Association Washington FFA Alumni Washington FFA Foundation #FFAalumni - in Olympia, Wash.



Shelly Thayne Finlinson > Delta FFA - Friends, Family, and Alumni

Feb. 4 at 4:05 p.m.

Sitting at the regional FFA alumni conference... #FFAalumni #ffardc Getting some good stuff here! These gals are great!!!



TO CHECK OUT THE 2017 ALUMNI REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT DATES AND LOCATIONS, VISIT FFA.ORG/GOTORDC.



National FFA Alumni Association

Like This Page · Feb. 4

The first of 11 Alumni Regional Development Conferences for 2017 takes place today! Follow along on Twitter at @ffa_alumni. Check out ffa.org/GoToRDC for more information on the other 10 conferences!

Friday, Feb. 3, state leaders from Utah, Idaho and Colorado met for one-on-one training, brainstorming, networking and much more!

#FFAalumni #FFArdc #FFAaproud - at Orem High School

TAKE *Note*

The National FFA Board of Directors recently approved two important changes for the organization. First, the Official Dress guidelines have been altered. Official Dress for FFA members includes:

- An official FFA jacket zipped to the top.
- Black slacks and black socks/nylons or black skirt and black nylons.
- White collared blouse or white collared shirt.
- Official FFA tie or official FFA scarf.
- Black dress shoes with closed heel and toe.
- Official garb of recognized religions.



The next change is to the National FFA Opening Ceremony. The reporter's script has been changed to include the Virgin Islands and will read as follows:

“**AS THE FLAG COVERS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, SO I STRIVE TO INFORM THE PEOPLE IN ORDER THAT EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD MAY KNOW THAT THE FFA IS A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION THAT REACHES FROM THE STATE OF ALASKA TO THE VIRGIN ISLANDS AND FROM THE STATE OF MAINE TO HAWAII.**”



Pop QUIZ: OFFICIAL FACTS

Can you match these fun facts with the correct 2016-17 National FFA Officers?

1. With the help of former FFA members, I created my high school's alumni chapter during my junior year.
2. I'm the most likely to talk to anyone. Karolyn Smith, Paul Pellerin and Merlin from South Dakota are all awesome people I have met and have had lengthy conversations with on airplanes.
3. I am the team's biggest animal lover. I have an Instagram account devoted to selfies with dogs, and I have aspirations of becoming a production veterinarian.
4. Days before competing in the national Creed Speaking CDE, I woke up in the third paragraph of the FFA Creed while sleeping.
5. I am related to Milton Hershey, the inventor of the Hershey's chocolate bar! All the men in my family have the middle name Hershey.
6. I am definitely most proud of my state. I think it's just a Texas thing. The team continually makes fun of me because I compare everything to Texas.

- A. David Townsend
- B. Victoria Harris
- C. DeShawn Blanding
- D. Ashley Willits
- E. Valerie Earley
- F. Trey Elizondo

Answers: 1. C; 2. A; 3. B; 4. E; 5. D; 6. F

MORE FROM OUR OFFICERS:

THE NATIONAL OFFICERS WERE RECENTLY IN JAPAN! READ THEIR OPINIONS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THINKING GLOBALLY ON PAGE 6.

LISTEN *Up!*

Michela Walker, 2016 National FFA Talent Competition winner, shares a few songs she plays on repeat. You can listen, too, with our playlist. Visit FFANewHorizons.org/Michela and enjoy!

"I Was Here" by Beyoncé

"I'm convinced Beyoncé wrote this song just for me!" Walker says. "She describes the journey I've been on in my singing career and in my personal life. It was the song I performed during the last round of the National FFA Talent Competition, and I think it impacts the people listening."

"Rise Up" by Andra Day

"This song will never go out of style," says Walker. "Its message is universal, and it can be sung any place, any time. It's such an inspiration to me. Andra truly uses her voice as an instrument."

{ Visit FFA.org/broadcast to watch Walker sing "Rise Up" at the 2016 National FFA Talent Competition. Tune in at 1:15:53. }

"Misbehavin'" by Pentatonix

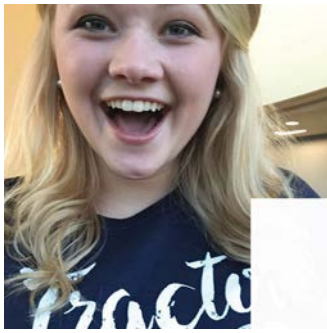
"This is my favorite a cappella group," she says. "This song came out the first year I tried out for the National FFA Talent Competition, and it encouraged me to be the best I can be."

READY TO COMPETE IN THE 2017 NATIONAL FFA TALENT COMPETITION? Visit FFA.org/convention for more information. Applications should be submitted/postmarked by Friday, July 7, 2017.

The National FFA Talent Competition is supported by Mahindra USA, Tractor Supply Company and Wrangler.



Michela Walker



LIVE IT  WEAR IT

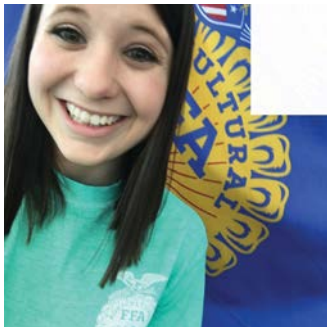
BUY IT



BLUE is for YOU

ShopFFA.org

ANYONE • ANYTIME • ANYWHERE



ALL MEMBER ACCESS AT ShopFFA.org

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.

NATIONAL FFA OFFICER Q&A

YOU RECENTLY RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO JAPAN THROUGH THE NATIONAL OFFICER INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE PROGRAM. WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT FOR FFA MEMBERS TO HAVE A GLOBAL MIND-SET?



David Townsend



NATIONAL FFA PRESIDENT

While in Japan, we toured the produce farm of Yuta Amano. Amano is considered a large-scale farmer, even though the land he uses to grow 12 varieties of fruits and vegetables is spread among 10 separate parcels totaling just 7½ acres. Mr. Amano and many other farmers in Japan encounter obstacles we do not in the U.S. and vice versa. Having a global mind-set means that we celebrate our differences and unite in our similarities.



Victoria Harris



NATIONAL FFA SECRETARY

We should have a global mind-set because it allows us to gain new perspectives and to realize that we are all more alike than different. The people in Japan – and even Japan's agriculture industry – face challenges similar to those here in the U.S. When we have a global mind-set, we can work together to solve these problems collectively.



DeShawn Blanding



SOUTHERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

Spending 10 days with a culture uniquely different from my own, I have become more self-aware of my thoughts and behaviors. By having a global mind-set, we step outside of our own cultural fishbowl and are more accepting of other perspectives.



Ashley Willits



EASTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

The world is much bigger than ourselves. We need to have a global perspective in order to be better leaders in our communities and states. We are the future of agriculture, so we need to be students of the world. We can use that broader perspective as we tackle future challenges in agriculture and in the world as a whole.



Valerie Earley



CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT

As future leaders in agriculture, we need to have our sights set on the impact our actions and decisions make at a global level. While in Japan, the team was able to see the relationship between American agriculture and the food consumed by people in Japan each day. Whether we are farmers, scientists or retailers, being involved in agriculture means we make a global impact each day because the food we produce touches people across the globe.



Trey Elizondo



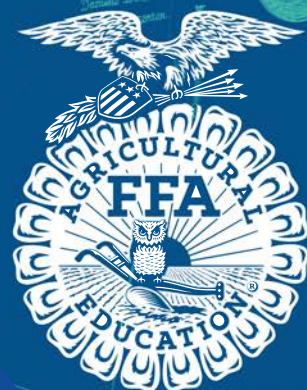
WESTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

One big lesson I learned in Japan is that agriculture is truly what ties the whole world together. A lot of the issues we face in agriculture in the U.S. are also global issues. There are countries that can use our resources, and there are lessons we can learn from other countries such as Japan. We are all occupants of this planet, and we should help each other in cultivating food for our future generations.



I CAN. WE WILL.

90th National FFA Convention & Expo // Oct. 25 - 28, 2017 // Indianapolis



Don't miss your chance to be
a part of the...

90TH NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION & EXPO

and share your agriculture
story!

Oct. 25 - 28 2017

THERE ARE ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES AT CONVENTION!

You can meet new members, engage during workshops, visit with industry professionals inside the expo, shop for FFA gear, be inspired by motivational speakers, take career success tours, have a little fun at the concert, rodeo or hypnotist show, and more!

Check out FFA.org/convention.

Be sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
for the latest buzz about convention.

AG 101 From Farm to Food

By Lisa Foust Prater

There are many different ways a crop can make its way from the field to the consumer. Even within a specific commodity, the route can vary greatly, depending on the farm's location and the final product or destination.

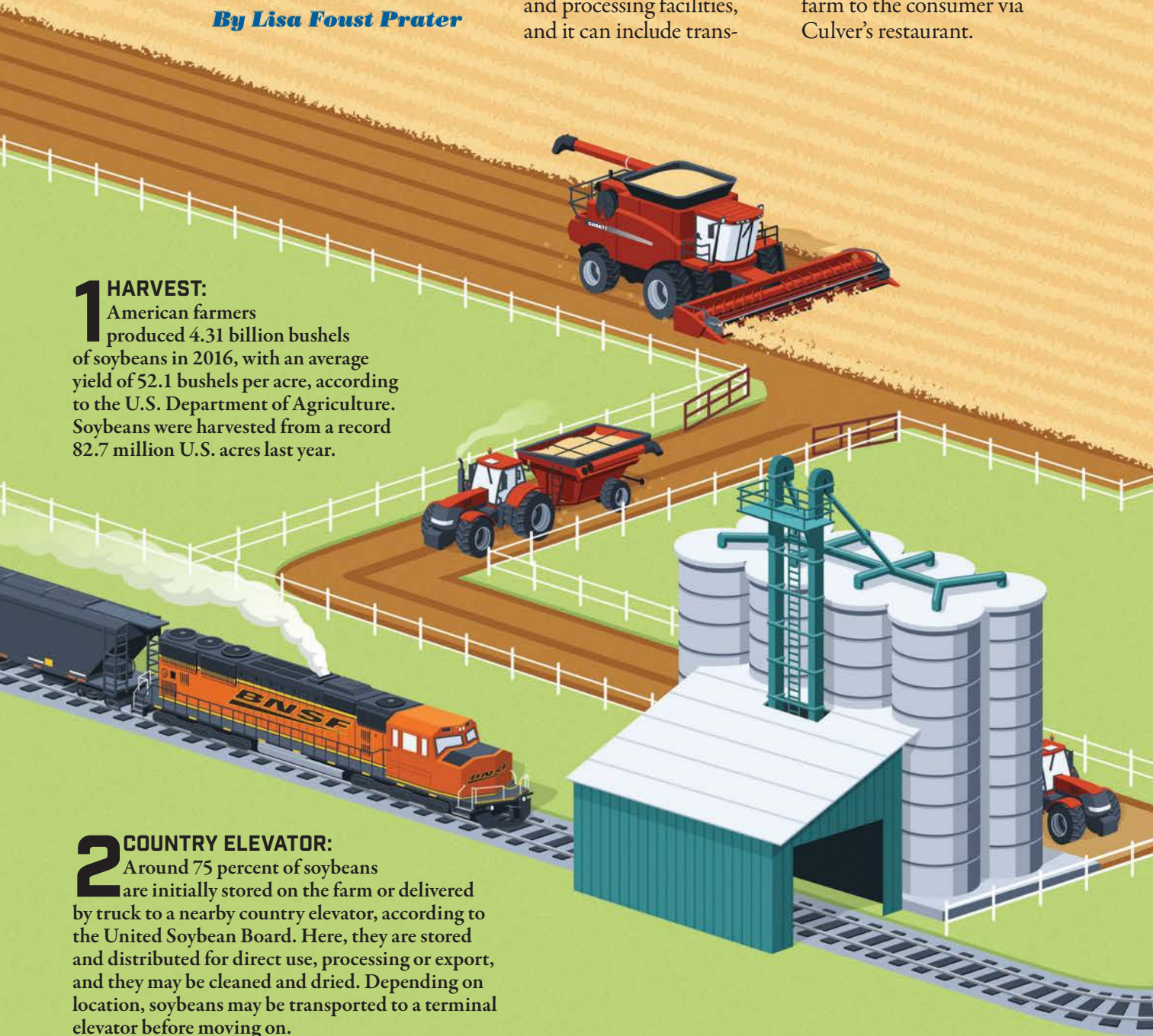
The process encompasses a number of storage and processing facilities, and it can include trans-

portation by truck, rail and barge. Soybeans, for example, are handled an average of 2.4 times and travel an average of 716 miles between the farm and export position or crushing plant, according to the United Soybean Board.

Here's how soybeans make their way from the farm to the consumer via Culver's restaurant.

1 HARVEST:
American farmers produced 4.31 billion bushels of soybeans in 2016, with an average yield of 52.1 bushels per acre, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Soybeans were harvested from a record 82.7 million U.S. acres last year.

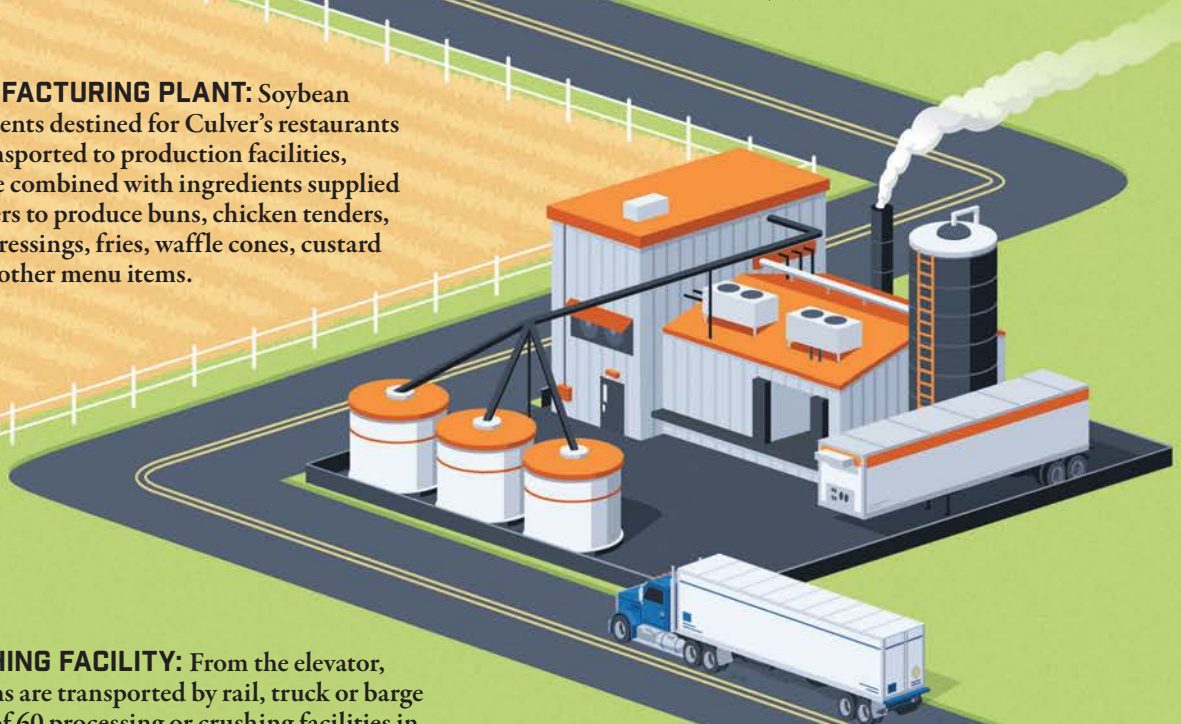
2 COUNTRY ELEVATOR:
Around 75 percent of soybeans are initially stored on the farm or delivered by truck to a nearby country elevator, according to the United Soybean Board. Here, they are stored and distributed for direct use, processing or export, and they may be cleaned and dried. Depending on location, soybeans may be transported to a terminal elevator before moving on.



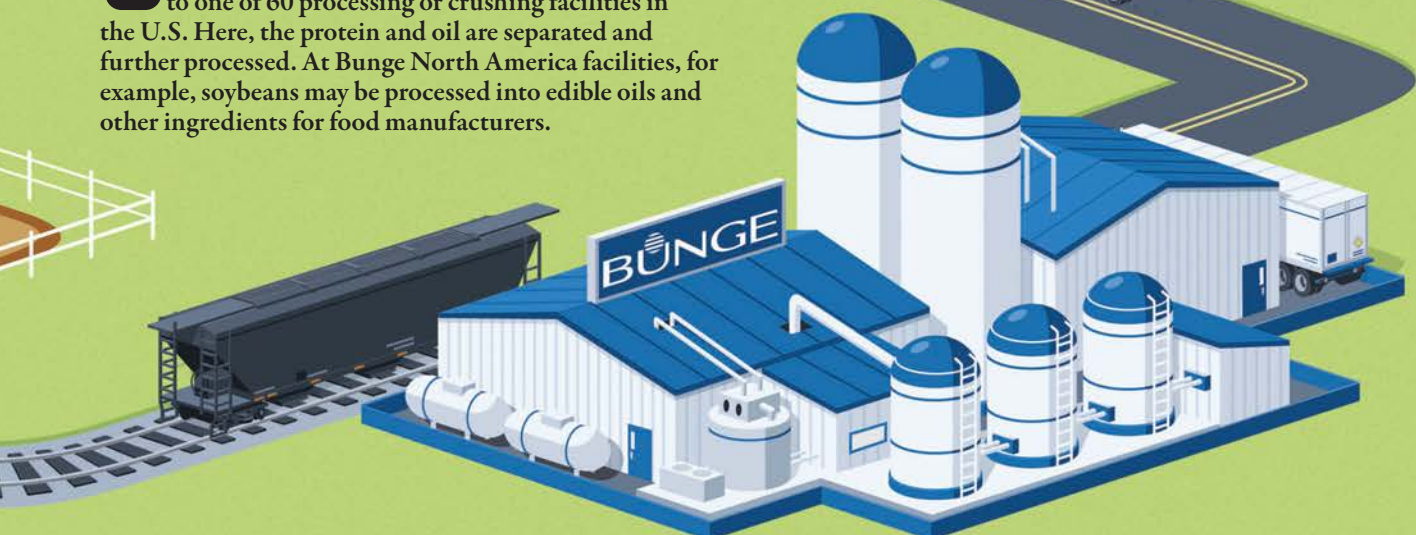


5 CULVER'S: Food products and manufactured ingredients are transported via truck to 620 Culver's restaurants in 24 states, where they are enjoyed by consumers.

4 MANUFACTURING PLANT: Soybean ingredients destined for Culver's restaurants are transported to production facilities, where they are combined with ingredients supplied by local farmers to produce buns, chicken tenders, soups, salad dressings, fries, waffle cones, custard toppings and other menu items.



3 CRUSHING FACILITY: From the elevator, soybeans are transported by rail, truck or barge to one of 60 processing or crushing facilities in the U.S. Here, the protein and oil are separated and further processed. At Bunge North America facilities, for example, soybeans may be processed into edible oils and other ingredients for food manufacturers.



GLOBAL HORIZONS

THIS MINNESOTA STUDENT'S LOVE OF AG HAS TAKEN HER TO THE FAR CORNERS OF THE WORLD – AND HER QUEST TO TEACH OTHERS IS JUST TAKING OFF.

STORY BY KRISTY MEYER

Growing up on a century farm, agriculture was always a part of alumni member Madison Taylor's life. But the seeds that sowed her love for agricultural education were planted at the various FFA events she attended in high school.

"Each time I attended an event, it would light such an incredible fire under me," Taylor says. "I was so excited to apply what I learned. Daily conversations with my FFA advisor, Ed Terry, helped me realize that agriculture was more than just my background; it was my future. It was a passion that defined who I was. Mr. Terry, along with my parents, really helped me see that agriculture gave me joy unlike anything else. That is when I decided I wanted to study agriculture in college and get a degree in ag education."

Now a junior at the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities, Taylor has even more experiences logged, including a supervised agricultural experience (SAE) in diversified crop production and poultry production, a term as chapter president and an American FFA Degree. Her desire to share her love of agriculture through agricultural education is finally taking flight.

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

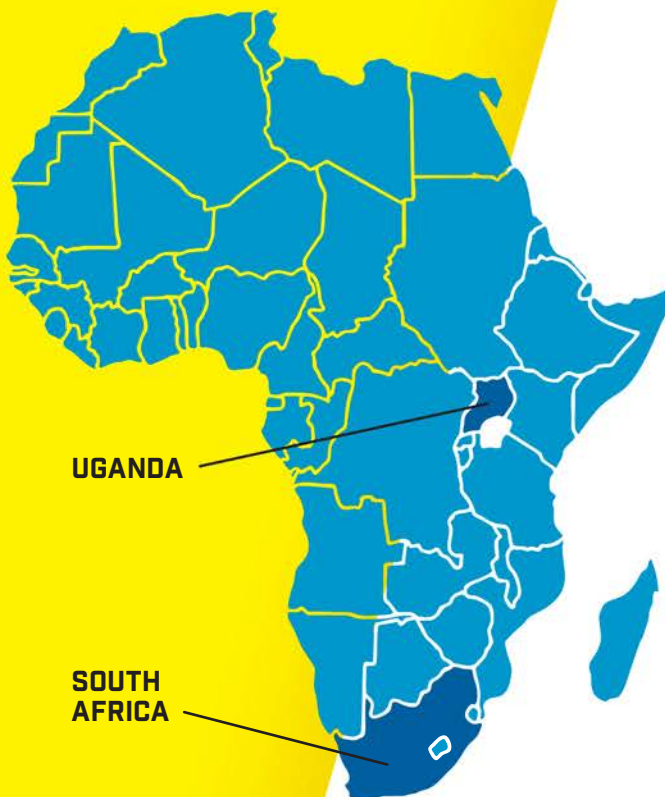
As a freshman in college, Taylor wanted to find a way to stay involved in FFA. With encouragement from her friends, she ran for state office and became a part of the 2015-16 Minnesota state FFA officer team.

**PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MITCH KEZAR**





Above: Taylor and her parents, Dean and Sara, are surrounded by turkeys on their Randolph, Minn., farm. Below: Taylor has traveled to Africa twice with FFA. First to South Africa, then to Uganda.



During this time, she had an opportunity to travel abroad and experience agriculture on an international level. It was all part of the International Leadership Seminar for State Officers (ILSSO). She, along with 74 other state officers from across the country, traveled to South Africa for 10 days.

“As a result of that journey, I felt I found a place where I needed to be,” Taylor says. “I developed a passion for international agriculture, educating others and sharing with others. It was the perfect mix of my love for traveling, agriculture and hands-on experiences.”

While traveling to South Africa, Taylor says she also found a mentor in Shane Jacques, education specialist in the Leadership, Education and Assessment Division at the National FFA Organization.

“I’m very thankful for him and the influence he has had in my life,” Taylor says.

Taylor was in Jacques’ small group when they traveled to South Africa, and he notes that she was engaged more than the average student.

“You could tell her interest in international agriculture was more than just on the surface,” Jacques says.

THE CALL IS REINFORCED

After traveling to South Africa, Taylor spent time reflecting on how she could best give back to FFA in her role as an alumna. It was during that time she received a phone call from Jacques.

“I was at a point where I needed something to keep pushing me,” Taylor says. One of Jacques’ colleagues was traveling to Uganda to talk about agricultural education, and she was looking for an FFA member to go with her to show how agricultural education could impact lives.

Jacques notes that Taylor, with her ability to connect with students and her leadership experience, was a perfect fit for what was needed.

“They were looking for a student who demonstrated all aspects of ag education. They needed someone to connect with students one on one; someone who could relate on a peer level. Taylor had the skill set and the interest,” Jacques says.

“I was in shock,” Taylor says. “I was going about life and then had this amazing opportunity fall into place.”

Taylor jumped at the opportunity and was soon in contact with life alumni members and National FFA Local Program Success Specialists Nina Crutchfield and Ben Meyer.

“I can honestly say that state office, along with the ILSSO experience and the experience I had in Uganda, inspired me to study international agriculture,” Taylor says.

“The opportunity to travel internationally was her hard work and leadership coming together,” says Taylor’s mom, Sara. “It was coming to fruition, and it was magical to watch. I told her to look inside herself and know where her heart was taking her.”

WATCH ONLINE!



Madison Taylor has done many interesting things with FFA, including traveling to Africa twice! Good news: She shares five lessons she's learned on the go at <http://bit.ly/globalhorizons>.

OPEN ARMS AND OPEN HEARTS

Together, Crutchfield, Meyer and Taylor traveled to Uganda as part of the USAID Farmer to Farmer Exchange program. They worked with educators at Gayaza High School, as well as members of the school's Young Farmers Club, to share how FFA, agricultural education and hands-on learning related to what they were currently doing.

"We just connected and started utilizing tools we had on hand," Taylor says. "We showed them the FFA website and resources, and they were so excited!"

Taylor fondly recalls the cultural day she experienced while she was there. First-year students cooked traditional dishes from their homeland and then shared information regarding the dish with those in attendance. Taylor was also able to work with local farmers.

"Learning from them was the greatest," Taylor says. "I saw the girls thriving. The people of Uganda welcomed us with open arms and hearts. There is diversity all around us. We need to remember this in the U.S. We need to be open to one another."

Top: Taylor works with Young Farmers Club members Ananda Lewis (left) and Rebecca Macheri (center).
Middle: Meyer, Crutchfield and Taylor join the Gayaza team on the Nile.
Bottom: Taylor shares the FFA jacket and emblem.



THE JOURNEY CONTINUES THROUGH ALUMNI

Once she returned from Uganda, Taylor wanted to share her experience with others. She discovered that a key way to make this happen was through the Randolph FFA

GO GLOBAL

There are various ways for FFA members to get involved with agriculture on an international level.

National FFA proficiency and Star finalists have the opportunity to apply for the Proficiency and Stars Travel Seminar. In the past, the seminar was held in Costa Rica. In 2017, the seminar will be in Ireland.

Current and past state officers can participate in the International Leadership Seminar for State Officers. The seminar has traveled to South Africa since 2014. Prior to those years, there were trips to Argentina, China and various destinations in Europe.

Maybe you're unable to travel abroad, yet still interested in international experiences. Consider these ideas:

- Apply for the World Food Prize Global Youth Institute.
- Attend a local cultural celebration.
- Study a foreign language.
- Eat at ethnic restaurants or shop the ethnic food aisle at the grocery store.
- Attend the National FFA Convention & Expo and talk with exhibitors who work around the world.



Above: "The people of Uganda welcomed us with open arms and hearts," Taylor says.
Below: Taylor's love of agriculture is evident – and she hopes to share it around the world.



Alumni Chapter in her hometown.

"You could see the pride the alumni took in our chapter when I was a member," Taylor remembers. "We were a large and successful chapter, and our alumni relationship was strong."

Now back at college, Taylor has been giving presentations to local chapters and discovering ways to get more involved. As she makes connections with alumni and members, she's working with teachers and advisors to see how she can make a difference to the Randolph FFA.

Whether it's helping with an SAE or doing career development event coaching, she plans to continue to give back.

"I remember how supportive our alumni were in all of our activities," Taylor says. "Whether we were raising money for members to attend state or national conventions or for other scholarships, our alumni were always there for us."

As she finishes up her studies, Taylor says her passion for agriculture continues to grow. In the spring of 2019, she plans to student-teach. She hopes to participate in a program that will allow her to teach in the U.S. for part of that time and then teach abroad for the remainder.

"Madison doesn't put up any boundaries," Sara Taylor says. "I'm excited to see what she's going to do next."

Taylor encourages other FFA members to take advantage of traveling abroad to understand the global impact of agriculture.

"As a student, you take classes that you believe help you have some idea of what ag looks like globally. You think what you hear on the news helps you," Taylor says. "When I went on these experiences, it helped me to have a greater appreciation for global agriculture; specifically, how it works and how it impacts our world and us as individuals." •

AS SHE MAKES CONNECTIONS WITH ALUMNI AND MEMBERS, TAYLOR WORKS WITH TEACHERS AND ADVISORS TO SEE HOW SHE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THE RANDOLPH FFA.



PREMIER *leadership*



Knox County FFA members in Ohio have been landscaping at Arlington National Cemetery since 2013. "It's one of the ways our students can give back to our nation," says advisor Jim Scott.

GROOMING FUTURE *Leaders*

Ohio FFA members pay tribute to fallen heroes at Arlington National Cemetery.

Junior and senior high school members from Ohio's Knox County FFA Chapter are living out the FFA mission to serve on a national level. In 2013, landscape design students at the Knox County Career Center in Mount Vernon, Ohio, began traveling to Washington, D.C., to help landscape at Arlington National Cemetery.

Jim Scott, Knox County FFA advisor and landscape design and management instructor, had the vision for the annual trip. Participating students are becoming leaders in their field.

"Ours is the only high school in the country that has this unusual opportunity to serve the military men and women resting at Arlington National Cemetery," Scott says. "It came about because our students are members of the National Association of Landscape Professionals, and we do this service project each year with 500 green industry professionals from across the country. It's one way our students can give back to our nation."

Every July, Scott takes up to six students on the 400-mile trip to D.C., where they spend two days working at Arlington National Cemetery. They also visit a major league baseball park or the Congressional Country Club so students can see career opportunities in landscape design.

"At Arlington, we are

assigned a crew leader who leads our group through tasks such as irrigating, fertilizing and planting flower beds," Scott says. "Our students interact with green industry leaders from across the country, which allows them to network and build connections. We also spend time on Capitol Hill, where we meet our senators and express concerns we have about agriculture and the green industry."

Money for the trip is raised by their FFA chapter, and each student attending contributes a portion of the cost. Austin Anderson, a senior, served at Arlington National Cemetery in 2016.

"I'm involved in JROTC, so I'm pretty patriotic already, but being at Arlington and seeing where thousands of people who protected our country are buried was a true privilege," Anderson says. "We cared for those grounds like we were caring for our brothers. It was very meaningful."

Junior Joe Arms also attended in 2016. It was his first time to visit Washington, D.C. "It was astonishing. We got to go into parts of the cemetery that the public doesn't get to see," he says. "To see what seems like miles of gravestones in a historic place like that was an incredible, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. You can't understand the significance of it until you are there."

Scott says students are usually a little apprehensive about serving at such a sacred cemetery, but it's extremely rewarding.

"Students often have an 'aha' moment," Scott says. "Living to serve is a key part of the FFA motto, and we try to serve in a way that will make a difference in students' lives. This project helps them become contributing members of society and builds their character. For me, that's one heck of a payday."

“Living to serve is a key part of the FFA motto, and we try to serve in a way that will make a difference in students' lives.”

***– Jim Scott,
FFA advisor***

– By Jessica Mozo

#AGIT FORWARD

THIS CALIFORNIA FFA CHAPTER COMBINES SNAIL MAIL AND SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE AGRICULTURAL LITERACY NATIONWIDE.

STORY BY BEV FLATT

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN TOMAC

As the flag covers the United States of America, so I strive to inform the people in order that every man, woman and child may know that the FFA is a national organization that reaches from the state of Alaska to the Virgin Islands and from the state of Maine to Hawaii.”

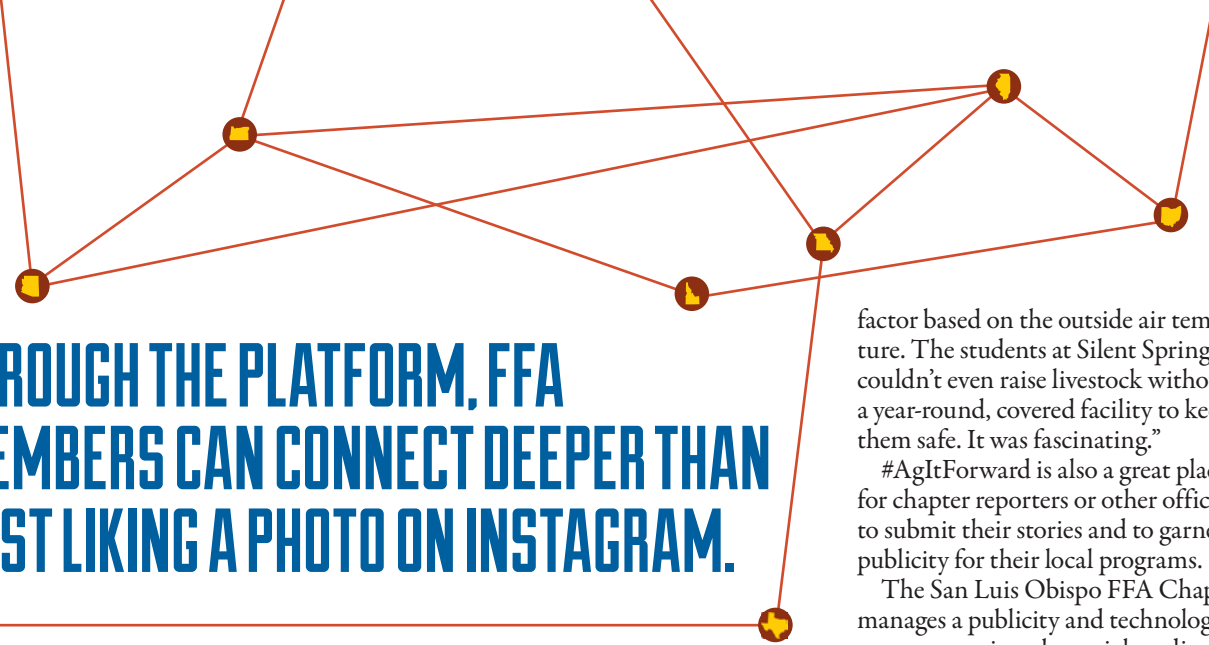
While the flag may cover all of the FFA chapters across the country, as expressed in the reporter’s script, the diversity of these members is as varied as the agricultural commodities they produce. An FFA member in Hawaii may work to produce macadamia nuts and harvest algae. Farmers in Alaska may strive to produce fruits and vegetables year-round in greenhouses and nurseries. A fisherman in Maine may also double as a blueberry farmer. Furthermore, a student at the University of the Virgin Islands may be studying the benefits of agritourism on the islands.

When it comes to understanding the diversity of agriculture in the U.S., there is no chapter better versed than the San Luis Obispo FFA in central California. This chapter created the viral social media campaign #AgItForward in 2014 and has been going strong ever since.

TANGIBLE RELATIONSHIPS

The main purpose of the #AgItForward project is to promote the importance of agriculture in communities throughout the U.S. FFA members can continue to realize the importance of





THROUGH THE PLATFORM, FFA MEMBERS CAN CONNECT DEEPER THAN JUST LIKING A PHOTO ON INSTAGRAM.

human connections and the value and tradition of paying knowledge forward.

“Amber Bjerre was the student who really spearheaded this program,” says Anna Bates, the San Luis Obispo FFA Chapter advisor. The FFA alumnus, “is now a student at Cornell University, but she was the lead student on this project and worked with our officer team to promote this idea. The whole reason we started the #AgItForward campaign in our chapter was to create tangible relationships with FFA members across the country. Followers have been able to learn more about agriculture nationwide and to help our chapter spread agricultural literacy.”

The initiative combines traditional pen pal methods with current trends on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Initially, the project started by sending letters out to FFA chapters, including collegiate and alumni chapters, across the country encouraging them to share their stories. The San Luis Obispo FFA Chapter would then post the messages and pictures on social media. The submitting chapter would pass the letter along to another chapter to

spread the message and to encourage them to pay it forward. However, the pace of society and access to technology have changed significantly in the past two years. Today, chapters can submit their thoughts and ideas online directly at agitforward.wixsite.com/goallout. A short 16-question survey allows chapters to share information about community service projects, newly chartered chapters and other unique chapter features, and then to promote them through the #AgItForward campaign on social media.

LIFE AT 41 BELOW ZERO

The initiative has evolved from an individual-to-individual communication effort to a place where chapters can go to find resources and ideas from other chapters.

“Recently, we connected a lot with the Silent Springs FFA Chapter in North Pole, Alaska,” says Bates. “The members wanted to meet new people and learn more about FFA programs across the country. It is a brand-new small homeschool chapter and is geographically isolated from other communities. Our chapter recently had a Skype session with the chapter members to learn about their community and what FFA looks like for them.” For example, Bates says, the North Pole students shared that the outside temperature was currently 41 below zero, which wasn’t a big deal to them, but it was something the San Luis Obispo students couldn’t even relate to. “Our students had to imagine what types of SAE programs they would have to participate in, just because of a limiting

factor based on the outside air temperature. The students at Silent Springs couldn’t even raise livestock without a year-round, covered facility to keep them safe. It was fascinating.”

#AgItForward is also a great place for chapter reporters or other officers to submit their stories and to garner publicity for their local programs.

The San Luis Obispo FFA Chapter manages a publicity and technology team to monitor the social media accounts. When a story is submitted, the team crafts the post and tags appropriate stakeholders, such as the state FFA officer team, state agricultural departments and local colleges of agriculture and collegiate FFA chapters.

Collegiate and alumni chapters can also submit their stories to #AgItForward through the website.

“There are so many collegiate FFA chapters and agricultural fraternities and sororities online,” says Bates. “#AgItForward is a great place for these organizations to recruit new students and for FFA members to learn about scholarship opportunities and collegiate programs to stay involved in FFA after graduation.”

Through the platform, FFA members can connect deeper than just liking a photo on Instagram. Members are able to identify the similarities and differences between chapters, to see what agricultural commodities are produced in different areas of the country and to figure out what they can learn from one another.

“Every initiative we work on in the San Luis Obispo FFA Chapter is somehow related back to the last line of the FFA motto, ‘Living to Serve,’” Bates says. “We just want to connect with one another and share our stories of community service, outstanding SAE projects, incredible opportunities for chapter engagement and other things that make a difference to FFA members. The agricultural industry has such a diverse landscape, and there are so many brilliant ideas and programs across the country. This is a place to collect those ideas and to share them with the world.” •

CONNECT AND LEARN

Follow #AgItForward to learn more about what agriculture and FFA look like from Alaska to the Virgin Islands and from Maine to Hawaii.

Twitter: @agitforward
Facebook: Agitforward
Instagram: agitforward

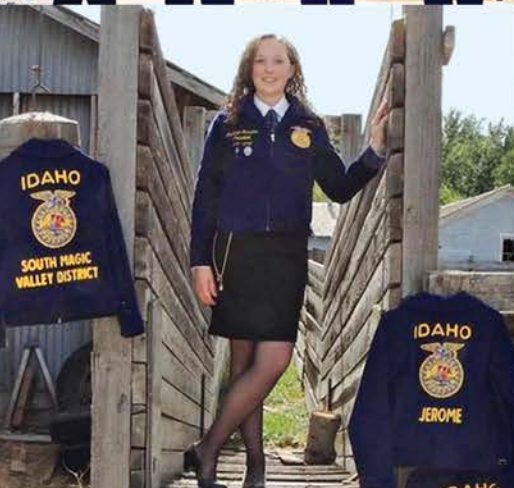


THE STATE OF SHARING

More than 100 chapters from 25 states have participated in #AgiTForward, sharing ideas ranging from officer retreat activities to community development ideas and more. Don't see your state listed? Do your part and help promote agricultural literacy for your location. Collegiate and alumni chapters can participate, too!

THE STATES:

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| Alaska | Mississippi |
| Arkansas | Missouri |
| Arizona | New Jersey |
| California | New York |
| Delaware | North Carolina |
| Florida | Ohio |
| Georgia | Oklahoma |
| Hawaii | Oregon |
| Idaho | Pennsylvania |
| Illinois | Puerto Rico |
| Indiana | South Carolina |
| Kansas | Tennessee |
| Kentucky | Texas |
| Michigan | Washington |
| | Wyoming |



#AGITFORWARD
WANTS TO HEAR FROM
YOUR CHAPTERS!



The Washington County FFA Alumni Chapter proves there is strength in numbers. The ways in which they lift up the Washington County FFA members are exemplary.

THE WASHINGTON COUNTY FFA ALUMNI
CHAPTER WON A NATIONAL AWARD FOR
ITS EXTRAORDINARY SUPPORT OF THE
WASHINGTON COUNTY FFA.

LIFT
'EM
UP

The 250-member Washington County FFA Alumni Chapter proves there really is strength in numbers, and FFA involvement doesn't have to end when school does.

Established in 1975 as one of the first alumni chapters in Kansas, the chapter supports the Washington County FFA, which comprises approximately 70 members who attend Washington County High School (WCHS) in Washington, Kan. The alumni chapter assists with fundraising efforts, chaperones events, serves as an advisory committee – and that's just the tip of the iceberg.

"Our FFA alumni are unbelievable," says John Kern, Washington County FFA advisor and WCHS agriculture science teacher. "Many of our alumni chapter members help us plan and implement our career pathway programs, and they help with several of the activi-

STORY BY JESSICA WALKER BOEHM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAN VIDETICH



Freshman Kope Sawin attends a Washington County FFA fundraising auction.

3 TIPS FOR SOCIAL FUNDRAISING

Crowdfunding services like GoFundMe.com and DonorsChoose.org can be useful tools for FFA chapters, but there are a few things to keep in mind when soliciting donations online.

1 Take the time to clearly explain why you are requesting money and, if possible, detail how every penny will be used. People, especially strangers, are far more likely to give to your cause when they know exactly how you plan to spend their hard-earned money.

2 Ensure you are asking for a reasonable amount of money to achieve your goals. Most crowdfunding sites give you the option to update your campaign with new or shifting needs, which means you can make adjustments later if you end up needing more than you originally requested.

3 Be mindful of the middle. Research shows that campaigns typically raise 42 percent of their funds in the first and last three days of their duration, so it's a good idea to have a midcampaign strategy in place.

ties we do throughout the year. They are a major part of what we do; I don't know where we would be without all of their help and support."

As a result, it comes as no surprise that the Washington County FFA Alumni Chapter was honored by the National FFA Alumni Association as 2016's Outstanding FFA Alumni Chapter.

"Any time you win anything nationally, it's pretty exciting," says Tim Zenger, who serves as president of both

the Washington County FFA Alumni Chapter and the Kansas FFA Alumni Association. "It was a major accomplishment for us, and it was validating to see the work we do for the kids be recognized."

ALUMNI PAY IT FORWARD

Designed to acknowledge FFA alumni chapters for their exceptional accomplishments and to encourage other alumni chapters to strive for excellence, the Outstanding FFA Alumni

Chapter award is given annually at the National FFA Convention & Expo. All eligible alumni chapters are invited to apply for the award each year, and the winning chapter receives a plaque and a \$200 Shop FFA gift card to

help provide supplies and materials for future events and programs.

Rod Stewart currently serves as the Washington County FFA Alumni Chapter treasurer and accepted the award at the 89th National FFA Convention & Expo with his wife, Kannette. He says winning was a huge shock, and it was ultimately just icing on the proverbial cake for the chapter.

"We fill out award applications because they help our FFA members qualify for scholarships to the Washington Leadership Conference (WLC) in D.C.," Stewart says. "It's important that we show we are an active alumni chapter in order for FFA members to receive scholarships, so that's really why we apply. We never plan on winning, but receiving this kind of recognition is truly appreciated."

Kern says the award is also well deserved, and he believes many of the alumni chapters' members maintain such a high level of involvement due to a desire to pass on what they've learned through FFA. In short, they're

“ WE PROVIDE THREE \$1,250 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS TO GRADUATING SENIOR MEMBERS EVERY YEAR, AND ALL ELIGIBLE SENIOR MEMBERS EARN A \$1,000 SCHOLARSHIP.” – TIM ZENGER

WASHINGTON COUNTY FFA ALUMNI CHAPTER PRESIDENT AND KANSAS FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

paying it forward, resulting in a win-win for everyone.

“Many of our alumni chapter members were leaders in FFA when they were in school, and the training and leadership development they received is one of the reasons they still feel so strongly about serving the community,” Kern says. “About 80 percent of our graduating members join the Washington County FFA Alumni Chapter right after their high school careers end. I think it’s because they realize the impact the chapter had on their lives. They want to show others that support going forward.”

SOME SERIOUS FUN-RAISING

The Washington County FFA Alumni Chapter’s most profitable and popular fundraiser is the Fun Auction, held in conjunction with the chapter’s annual meeting on the Sunday that kicks off National FFA Week each February. The event is open to the public and includes a lunchtime fish fry and an evening benefit auction with items donated by local businesses and individuals. All of the funds raised are used to help Washington County FFA members.

For example, the alumni chapter raised \$13,275 at the 2015 Fun Auction, which was used to send 47 members to the Kansas FFA Leader Lab, WLC, the Kansas state convention and the National FFA Convention & Expo, state conference for chapter leaders and various camps. In addition, a significant portion of the earnings went toward college scholarships.

“One reason I think we are so successful is that we’re very transparent about where the money we raise goes,” Zenger says. “We provide three \$1,250 college scholarships to graduating senior members every year, and all eligible senior members earn a \$1,000 scholarship. We’ve also helped several members go to WLC over the years, and we do our best to help members attend the Kansas State Convention, state contests and other events. If Mr. Kern needs assistance buying extra tools or materials for the classroom, we pitch in. The community wants to give when it realizes who it’s helping.”

According to Stewart, the 2016 Fun Auction raised \$15,000, resulting in even more benefits for Washington



Washington County freshman Evan White and auctioneer Luke Bott take bids and raise funds.

County FFA members.

“It means a lot to me to be able to help the kids,” Stewart says. “Some of them don’t have the same opportunities as other members, and we try to provide those opportunities so they can have the chance to grow as individuals and become well-rounded citizens. When I see these kids grow up and become successful leaders in their communities, that’s what really makes me feel like I’ve done something good.”

The Washington County FFA Alumni Chapter also partners with the Washington County FFA to assist with events like land judging, livestock and agronomy competitions by volunteering their time and resources. They regularly coach FFA members who are preparing for their supervised agricultural experience (SAE) interviews or FFA-related speeches and project presentations. Additionally, alumni chapter members judge state- and national-level FFA events.

“When we have an activity, our alumni chapter members are usually the first people to step forward and provide what we need, whether that’s food, parking cars or helping us acquire a venue,” Kern says. “They help us with countless things, and I feel fortunate to be an advisor of a chapter that has something set up so well and runs so efficiently.” •

HOW TO HELP

Alumni, it’s likely easier than you think to have a big impact on your local FFA chapters.

If you’re interested in helping a chapter raise money, consider hosting a community-wide event in its honor – like a pancake breakfast with a suggested donation – or join together with fellow alumni to host a consignment sale. Other fundraising options include auctions, car washes and walkathons, just to name a few. Get creative!

Donating your time is another way to help local FFA chapters. For example, most chapters need volunteers to assist with events, and members who are preparing for interviews or competitions typically need a sounding board. Who better to help out than a former FFA member who knows what judges are looking for?

Finally, simply get in touch with your local chapter’s advisor and ask what he or she needs. You may have the materials or resources on hand. If not, consider helping out with the cost.

THE THIRD ANNUAL FFA TEE



In celebration of our revered history and the countdown to our 100-year anniversary in 2028, FFA has created the *Blue Jackets Gold Standards 2017-2018 Annual Tee*.

Add to your collection with this year's tee! It honors the blue jacket as a true icon of FFA, and it recognizes our members who set the gold standard for young leaders in the nation.



**DON'T MISS OUT —
START YOUR COLLECTION TODAY!
ORDER THE FFA ANNUAL TEE
COLLECTOR PACK
3PACK | \$30.00**

ShopFFA.org • 888-332-2668

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.





HOW TO USE *AgExplorer.FFA.org*

***Start exploring career areas and
find your future in agriculture.***

When Abrah Meyer, former national FFA central region vice president and current FFA alumni member, was a kid, she envisioned her future with a white coat and stethoscope in the sterile hallways of a hospital. Today, she is studying agricultural business and supply chain management at Iowa State University.

The demand for professionals in every area of agriculture is high. Learn more about which of the 235 careers in agriculture may be right for you by visiting AgExplorer.FFA.org.

“I grew up on a farm, and it wasn’t until my senior year of high school that I began to really appreciate what was going on in the agricultural industry,” Meyer says. “As a kid, it was more along the lines of ‘UGH! I have to get up before dawn and be out in the fields again!’”

In fact, medical school was the game plan up until Meyer’s senior year of high school, when she enrolled in an agribusiness and marketing class. During the course, she learned more about market analysis, international business and economics. From there, she was hooked.

“It took me my entire high school career to realize I wanted to work in agriculture,” Meyer says. “FFA members today have the AgExplorer resource at the tips of their fingers, and they can make inquiries and decisions much earlier than I did.”

FFA partnered with Discovery Education and AgCareers.com to create countless resources for FFA members of all ages to explore careers within agriculture. Viewers can do in-depth research into nine career focus areas, review at least 235 unique career profiles, participate in virtual field trips and connect with industry professionals from Ford, Cargill,

CSX, Zoetis, John Deere and more.

“The coolest part of AgExplorer is the interactive career assessment you can take,” Meyer says. “You can enter the classes you enjoy the most, the work environment that is the most appealing to you and even your hobbies. The assessment will generate the areas where you might find a career in agriculture. For example, I really love math and science. When I took the assessment, one of the careers it said I should look at was commodity merchandising, which is a lot of the supply chain management work I am studying at school right now.”

AgExplorer can be used as the “explore” arm of the My Journey platform, and FFA members can discover professional organizations and associations connected to potential career options. Members can join these organizations to build their professional skills and to make connections that could lead to job shadowing, mentoring and internships through a global network of agriculturists – no matter what stage of their career they are in.

Combining AgExplorer with My Journey gives FFA members access to tangible, hands-on resources that can be put to immediate use. Find your future in agriculture at AgExplorer.FFA.org.

– By Bev Flatt

**“ FFA MEMBERS TODAY HAVE
THE AGEXPLORER RESOURCE
AT THE TIPS OF THEIR FINGERS,
AND THEY CAN MAKE INQUIRIES
AND DECISIONS MUCH EARLIER
THAN I DID. ”**

– ABRAH MEYER

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

Alabama's North District held a canned food drive for a local food bank during district contests in April.

ALASKA

During FFA Week, Delta Junction FFA built kiosks at local historic sites, which provided information about locally grown foods.

ARIZONA

Snowflake FFA hosted an agricultural education day for 4th-6th graders during FFA Week. Kids learned about agricultural mechanics, livestock production, specialty animals, crops and more.

ARKANSAS

For three weeks during the summer, members can take industry tours and learn leadership skills at the Arkansas Leadership Conference at Camp Couchdale.

CALIFORNIA

Chino-Don Lugo FFA hosted a Moo-tastic Farm Party to educate the community about the importance of conservation, soil management and pollution.

COLORADO

Limon FFA members use their aquaculture class to raise fish for the Colorado Division of Wildlife. They monitor water temperature and acidity, and help release fish to repopulate lakes.

CONNECTICUT

The Housatonic Valley FFA

Alumni Association sponsors an exchange program for members. Last summer, two members visited a chapter in South Dakota, and two South Dakota members came to Connecticut.

DELAWARE

The Delaware FFA Association is organizing a first-ever statewide camp for its members in August.

FLORIDA

Bellevue FFA worked with its local hospital to create Chemo Care Kits for Kids for children going through chemotherapy. Kits contained activity books, candy and hand-knit hats.

GEORGIA

Gilmer County FFA's new Agriculture Center opened this spring. On the grounds were apple orchards, a food-processing center, livestock facilities and a meeting space.

HAWAII

Konawaena FFA made homemade jelly to distribute to the elderly in the community.

IDAHO

District Officer Training (DOT), a three-day leadership experience in Idaho's wilderness, helps officers learn new skills to serve their districts.

ILLINOIS

Every June at the state convention, Illinois FFA Alumni raffle a John Deere Gator. The money they raise funds scholarships that help members attend

different conferences.

INDIANA

Ten interactive learning stations in the Indiana FFA pavilion at the Indiana State Fair educate the public about topics related to FFA, agriculture and STEM.

IOWA

Roland-Story FFA delivered nutritious, prepackaged meals to homebound community members. Talk about living to serve!

KANSAS

To shine a spotlight on supervised agricultural experiences, members are finding ways to promote hands-on, experiential learning.

KENTUCKY

From June to July, around 1,500 members prepare for the upcoming school year with training at the Kentucky FFA Leadership Training Center in Hardinsburg.

LOUISIANA

During National FFA Week, state officers participated in an industry and chapter tour in southern Louisiana. The agenda includes meeting other members, advisors and guests, and learning about the rich history of FFA.

MAINE

State officers spend some of their summer participating in the Potato Blossom Festival in Fort Fairfield and assisting with the Northern Maine Fair in Presque Isle.

MARYLAND

FFA members educate attendees at the Maryland State Fair about agriculture at the U-Learn Farm. Activities range from milking a fake cow to planting different varieties of lettuce.

MASSACHUSETTS

The Massachusetts FFA Association is Growing Together this year with a statewide service project. The plan distributes seed starter kits to the community and helps "feed the nine!"

MICHIGAN

Members are participating in the Alcona Syrup Day event, where they can eat pancakes, try homemade syrup and learn about sap production.

MINNESOTA

Glencoe-Silver Lake FFA built bookshelves, hosted a book drive and delivered stocked bookshelves to elementary schools in its school district.

MISSISSIPPI

Members will partner with Habitat for Humanity on July 1. The to-do list includes renovating parks, planting communal gardens and teaching agricultural lessons at local libraries.

MISSOURI

Members will learn about food insecurity and service while packing 50,000 meals through the Meals of Hope program during the Missouri State Fair.

MONTANA

State officers tour various agricultural operations on the West Coast, including the Wheat Marketing Center in Portland, Ore.

NEBRASKA

Many members spend the summer preparing livestock,

crops and other exhibits for their county fairs. Good luck!

NEVADA

Nevada's newly elected state officers will facilitate a Summer Leadership Camp – a perfect time to develop leadership skills and to run for zone office.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

This spring, the Granite State Association of FFA joined New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu in proclaiming the week of Feb. 13 as Career & Technical Student Organization Week.

NEW JERSEY

The New Jersey FFA Alumni hosted the annual golf tournament in honor of John and Laurie Neyhart. Community members team up to support student scholarships and leadership opportunities.

NEW MEXICO

Harding County FFA developed a water conservation garden and worked with younger students to plant it at the entrance of their school.

NEW YORK

Oswegatchie FFA Camp will have a hot summer, hosting over 700 youth in the Adirondacks. Oswegatchie offers 1,200 acres of woods, ponds and FFA leadership training.

NORTH CAROLINA

For six weeks during the summer, members attend FFA Camp, one of the oldest programs in the state.

NORTH DAKOTA

Using \$1,000 grants from the state Department of Agriculture, 10 chapters planted gardens with the goal of donating 250,000 pounds of fresh produce to

food pantries, shelters and charitable organizations around the state.

OHIO

Bloom-Carroll FFA members spend the summer operating an Ag-Awareness Summer Camp. They teach 1st-5th graders about agriculture and FFA.

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma FFA Alumni Leadership Camp takes place in July. Eye-openers, water olympics and small groups transform the campground into the happiest place on Earth.

OREGON

The Joseph FFA Chapter uses a grant to offer an aviation course. Students learn the basics of flight and other aspects of aeronautical implementation.

PENNSYLVANIA

During Pennsylvania's annual state convention week, 1,500 FFA members gather at Penn State University for CDEs and leadership development events, delegate business and more.

RHODE ISLAND

A state officer "Wanna Be" workshop in March helped members learn about what it takes to hold the position. Current state officers were on hand for guidance.

SOUTH CAROLINA

From June to August, members hit the beach for FFA Summer Camp for leadership and communication skills – and for fun in the sun, too!

SOUTH DAKOTA

Advanced animal and plant science classes hosted the last few summers by Winner FFA help members work with the garden plants or livestock that they'll show at the county fair.

TENNESSEE

Five Tennessee FFA Stars will travel on the third annual Star Tour in June. On the route, they'll meet with over 200 campers at Camp Clements and then travel across the state to meet with the commissioner of agriculture and others.

TEXAS

More than 900 members and advisors participated in Texas FFA Day in Austin. The Texas Senate and House of Representatives recognized the 100th anniversary of the Smith-Hughes Act.

UTAH

This summer, members from across the state will learn leadership skills at the Utah FFA's Chapter Officer Leadership Training (COLT) to help strengthen communities.

VERMONT

Over 150 members competed in two CDEs at the state's Winter Farm Show competitions. Members will soon collect sap for their maple sugar operations.

VIRGINIA

Members from across the state socialize and learn about FFA at the Virginia FFA Leadership Camp, organized by past state officers at Graves Mountain Lodge.



WASHINGTON

More than 200 legislators, alumni and special guests kicked off an FFA license plate program with an event at the governor's mansion. National FFA Talent Competition winner Michela Walker sang. (Check out Walker's three favorite songs on page 4.)

WEST VIRGINIA

Several chapters have implemented high tunnels into their agricultural programs. A Farm to School program gives members the opportunity to grow fresh veggies for their school cafeterias.



WISCONSIN

The number of members who will come together in June during the 88th Wisconsin FFA Convention to package 40,000 pounds of food to distribute in southern Wisconsin.

WYOMING

The Wyoming FFA Leadership Camp is turning 40! Students will come together for a week to work on chapter communication, leadership, public speaking and outdoor adventure.

PUERTO RICO

In September, members from around the island will meet on a small farm to do community work, plant vegetables and help in a shelter.

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

Last summer, students took part in the islands' first Ag Discovery event. The agenda included a field trip to the garden and poultry farm managed by the Arthur A. Richards Junior High FFA Chapter.



Starling with Senator Thom Tillis in Washington, D.C.

What I KNOW

Ray STARLING



The 1996-97 National FFA Eastern Region Vice President talks with FFA New Horizons about his new agriculture policy position within the White House – and how FFA prepared him for the task.

NH: WHAT ARE YOUR DUTIES AS SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND FOOD ASSISTANCE?

RS: The National Economic Council is one of several policy-making councils in the White House. Each of the seven commissioned officers on the council is tasked with surveying the landscape within our sector (mine happens to be agriculture) and making policy recommendations to the president that will help move the industry forward.

NH: AS AN FFA MEMBER OF THE MIDWAY FFA CHAPTER IN NORTH CAROLINA, DID YOU IMAGINE THIS PARTICULAR CAREER PATH FOR YOURSELF?

RS: Coming out of FFA, I understood that the ag sector needed great technical experts, but I also understood that it would need folks who could articulate on the policy side of the equation. FFA did give me that insight. Certainly I never

thought I'd be advising the president of the United States on ag when I was back in Midway at Spivey's Corner, North Carolina.

NH: HOW DID FFA PREPARE YOU FOR YOUR CURRENT CAREER?

RS: I think when you go to the convention and you're surrounded by tens of thousands of students who are equally as excited about agricultural education, FFA, and the blue and gold, that gives you some sense of peace and comfort that, 'Hey, this is a cool career path. I'm not going to let anybody else tell me anything different.' FFA provided me with a ton of technical training, as well. Anyone who slogs through parliamentary procedure or poultry judging practices knows what I'm talking about.

NH: WHAT IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING AGRICULTURE, AND HOW CAN FFA MEMBERS HELP?

RS: When I think about limits on what we're able to do in the ag sector, one of our biggest limitations is access to talent. But one of the best ways to address the challenge for talent in agriculture overall is to make sure we have the right talent in the ag ed classroom. With the right teachers there, we will produce the right graduates with the right attitudes about careers in agriculture, thus solving our bigger problem.

To read the full interview, visit FFANewHorizons.org and search for "Ray Starling."

– By Julie Woodard

“CERTAINLY I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE ADVISING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES ON AG WHEN I WAS BACK IN MIDWAY.”



Ag Angle

CARRIE WATSON

AGE: 28

LOCATION: Stewartsville, Mo.

CHAPTER: Former member,
East Buchanan FFA Chapter

FACEBOOK: CW Photography

WHEN CIERRA KELLER CONTACTED ME TO TAKE HER SENIOR PICTURES, SHE MADE A VERY HEARTFELT REQUEST. She told me that she wanted her grandpa, Gene Keller, to be in some of her photos, along with the FFA jacket he wore from 1959-63. The bond this man has with his granddaughters is enough to make anyone swell with pride.

* **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.



GIVE THE GIFT OF BLUE

SO OTHERS CAN RECEIVE THE GIFT OF BLUE

DONATE | APPLY | NOMINATE

For those who have worn it, the iconic blue corduroy is more than just a jacket — it is the outward symbol of honor, faith and pride. It is the tradition that unifies members of FFA everywhere. Some though, can't afford to be part of that tradition.

GIVE the Gift of Blue by donating online to ensure that this time-honored tradition lives on.

RECEIVE the Gift of Blue by applying online for your own jacket or nominating a member for this great opportunity.

LEARN MORE AT FFA.ORG/GIVEBLUE