



NEW

Fall 2019

HORIZONS

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TAKE FLIGHT

**Food
Waste
by the
Numbers**

**Alumni and
Supporters
Share FFA
Memories With
#FFACheckIN**

**BOX ELDER FFA
MEMBERS IN UTAH
FLY HIGH WITH
AVIATION COURSES**



FFA FLIES HIGH

I've been excited to tell the story of the Box Elder High School aviation program since I first learned about it a few years ago. Located in Brigham City, Utah, Box Elder FFA members and other high school students have the unique opportunity to learn about the many ways aviation technology applies to the industry of agriculture. They're also becoming more acquainted with the latest ag technology.

"Our aviation courses at Box Elder High School are helping open students' eyes to the possibilities that stand before them, including several careers they often didn't even know existed," says Box Elder FFA advisor Jason Bingham. "They get hands-on experience with drones, flight simulators and other high-tech equipment, and many are flying airplanes under supervision and accumulating flight hours."

As a result, students are realizing a newfound passion for aviation.

"I learned so much about aviation technology and how we can apply it to industries like agriculture," says Jenny Benitez-Raya, a former Box Elder FFA member who participated in the aviation program and plans to pursue a career in aviation. "For example, I never knew how drones could be used to help improve yields on farms."

Read more about the Box Elder High School aviation program in "The Sky's the Limit," page 16.

In this issue, you'll also find articles about some innovative agriculture educators, the state of food waste in the U.S., the newly chartered North Carolina School for the Deaf FFA Chapter, an Arizona chapter that actively celebrates the contributions of its Hispanic and Latino members, and more.

Enjoy and have a fruitful fall!



Justin Davey

Editor, *FFA New Horizons*

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THE FFA VISION

FFA is providing the next generation of leaders who will change the world.

THE FFA MISSION

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

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MISSION

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

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.

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LET'S BE FRIENDS

THESE SIX AG EDUCATORS USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO REACH A DIGITAL GENERATION. FOLLOW EACH TO LEARN MORE.

— By Jessica Mozo

KATIE COOPER

Salmon FFA in Salmon, Idaho
FACEBOOK: Katie Cooper

Learn about Salmon FFA events and see photos of its FFA Petting Zoo and annual Spring Feed and Fundraiser.

DANIEL FOSTER

Penn State University in University Park, Pa.
TWITTER: @FosterDanielD

A teacher of ag teachers, Foster uses Twitter to be a positive agent for change in the industry.

CHARLOTTE LANGLEY MAIN

Bullard FFA in Bullard, Texas
FACEBOOK: Charlotte Langley Main

Main uses Facebook to celebrate chapter accomplishments and advocate for positive change in her community.

NICOLE MORRIS

Central Catholic FFA in Modesto, Calif.
INSTAGRAM: @themilkdiva

Follow Morris on Instagram for an inside look at the life of a third-generation dairy farmer.

ABBY READSHAW

Patrick Henry FFA in Hamler, Ohio
TWITTER: @FFA_PH

Check out the Patrick Henry FFA Chapter Twitter feed for chapter happenings and member accomplishments.

EMILY RUDDER

Limon FFA in Limon, Colo.
FACEBOOK: Emily Rudder

Rudder shares personal anecdotes about how FFA impacted her life, as well as Limon FFA events and accomplishments.

CALENDAR

Aug. 1:

FALL SEMESTER-LONG LIVING TO SERVE GRANT OPENS

Did you know that your FFA chapter can apply for up to \$1,200 to support a semester-long service-learning project? Find out more at FFA.org/livingtoserve/grants. Applications are due **Sept. 3** with award notifications by **Sept. 15**.

Sept. 3:

ALUMNI AND SUPPORTERS GRANT APPLICATION DUE

Various grants are available for FFA Alumni and Supporters chapters. Visit FFA.org/alumnigrants for more information.

Sept. 5:

SAE GRANT APPLICATION OPENS ONLINE

Are you in grades 7 through 12 and looking for \$1,000 to start or to expand your SAE? Visit FFA.org/participate/grants-and-scholarships/sae-grants to apply for an SAE grant.

Sept. 19:

NATIONAL TEACH AG DAY

Let's celebrate school-based agricultural education! Visit naae.org/teachag for celebration inspiration from the National Teach Ag Campaign. Host BASF will also livestream the celebration from its North Carolina offices.

Sept. 20-21:

NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI AND SUPPORTERS REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Reserve your spot for this RDC in Pendleton, Ore. Visit FFA.org/gotordc.

Sept. 27-28:

NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI AND SUPPORTERS REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Registration is currently open for this RDC in Martin, Tenn. Visit FFA.org/gotordc for more information.

Oct. 30-Nov. 2:

92ND NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION & EXPO

Registration opens Sept. 10 at 6 p.m. EDT for the 2019 National FFA Convention & Expo. Join tens of thousands of your closest friends in Indianapolis for an experience you'll never forget. Visit FFA.org/convention.

Nov. 15-16:

NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI AND SUPPORTERS REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Registration opens Sept. 23 for this RDC in Lexington, Ky. Visit FFA.org/gotordc for more information.

THE FUTURE OF FARMING IS BLUE

THE FFA BLUE ROOM SHOWCASES NEW AND EMERGING CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE, AND IT WILL BRING EVEN MORE TECHNOLOGIES TO THE STAGE AT THE 2019 NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION & EXPO.

When the ribbon is cut and the expo hall opens at the National FFA Convention & Expo, more than just the doors to the ballrooms are unlocked. Thanks to partnerships with Microsoft and AgriNovus Indiana, the FFA Blue Room opens the door to future careers in agriculture and the solutions the industry can provide to the world. In 2018, more than 4,000 visitors learned about new career opportunities in agriculture, as the demand for innovation and technology increases.

“The future looks bright, and technology is paving the way for continuing to keep up with an ever-growing planet population,” one 2018 attendee said.

“I learned that even if you do not have a farming background, you can make a difference in agriculture.”

In fact, more than 95 percent of attendees indicated they saw how agriculture is solving problems in the world through the FFA Blue Room. Its

overwhelming success in 2018 has led to additional sponsors, inspiring speakers, and even more opportunities to bring solutions to agriculture.

The 2019 FFA Blue Room will bring 15 new 90-minute sessions, interactions with ag tech start-ups and hands-on experiences at industry booths. Visit FFA.org/Blue365 to learn more about FFA Blue 365 and find more details about the 2019 Blue Room at the National FFA Convention & Expo.

— By Bev Flatt

FFA
BLUE
ROOM®



In 2018, more than 4,000 visitors learned about new agriculture industry career opportunities.

Quiz: CULTIVATE THE FUTURE

National Teach Ag Day is Sept. 19 and exists to encourage individuals to consider becoming an agriculture teacher. It also celebrates the positive contributions agriculture teachers make in our schools and communities.

Take our quiz to test your knowledge about agricultural education careers, then discover more information at AgExplorer.com and NAAE.org.

1. How many highly skilled agricultural education job openings are there annually?
A. \$40,132
B. About 1,000
C. About 13,000
D. 20%
E. \$76,000
2. Job opportunities in agricultural education increase nationwide by how much each year?
3. What is the average annual full-time starting salary for a middle or high school agriculture teacher?
4. Agriculture teachers are needed at the college/university level, too. What is the average annual full-time salary for a postsecondary agriculture teacher?
5. How many middle and high school agriculture teachers are there in the United States?

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

HERE'S TO OUR HISPANIC MEMBERS

THIS ARIZONA FFA CHAPTER CELEBRATES THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF HISPANIC MEMBERS YEAR-ROUND.

Although the North American Association for National Hispanic Heritage Month is Sept. 15 through Oct. 15, there's no better time than the present to celebrate the growing population of Hispanic FFA members. Hispanic farmers represent a growing sector of agriculture in the United States, and Hispanics are the largest group of minority FFA members. In the 2018-19 school year, the National FFA Organization included more than 100,000 Hispanic

members, representing 14.8 percent of its membership.

The AAEC South Mountain High School FFA Chapter in Phoenix works hard to make sure all of its members, parents and alumni and supporters feel included and valued. More than 82 percent of students at the school come from Hispanic families, and 75 percent of the chapter's FFA officer team is Hispanic.

In 2018, the chapter adopted a bilingual FFA opening ceremony, vowing to

always perform its opening ceremonies and slideshows at its banquet in both Spanish and English going forward. There are two students at each office – one speaking Spanish and one speaking English. Advisor and guest speeches at the banquet are also delivered in both languages.

"We found many of our families are more comfortable with Spanish, and we noticed that while parents would attend our events, they were often lost

as to what was happening and didn't understand why their child was being recognized," says Kevin Norris, the agricultural education teacher and co-advisor for AAEC South Mountain FFA. "It became our goal to ensure every parent and alumni and supporter had a seat at the table and felt included."

To learn more about National Hispanic Heritage Month, visit HispanicHeritageMonth.org.

— By Jessica Mozo

THE COMPLETE OFFICER TEE COLLECTION

Available at ShopFFA.org



02568 (S-2X) | \$15.50



Talking Points:

ORGANIC *vs.* CONVENTIONAL FOOD

WHAT MAKES ORGANIC CROPS DIFFERENT FROM CONVENTIONAL CROPS? IS ONE WORTH MORE OR BETTER FOR YOU? HERE'S HELP IN ADDRESSING THESE AND OTHER QUESTIONS YOU MAY GET ABOUT ORGANIC FOODS.

Q: HOW ARE ORGANIC CROPS DIFFERENT FROM NONORGANIC (CONVENTIONAL)?

A: USDA-certified organic crops cannot use synthetic fertilizers, pesticides or genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Typically, livestock manure and compost are used to improve organic soil quality. Both organic and nonorganic production can utilize crop rotation, cover crops, burning, tillage and mulch for nonchemical weed control.

Q: CAN ANIMAL PRODUCTS BE LABELED ORGANIC?

A: Yes, if they meet USDA regulations, including outdoor access by the animals to certified-organic fields,

100 percent organic feed and no antibiotics or growth hormones.

Q: DO ORGANIC AND NATURAL MEAN THE SAME THING?

A: No. USDA classifies *natural* as a product that contains no artificial ingredient or added color and is only minimally processed.

Q: IS ORGANIC FOOD MORE NUTRITIOUS OR SAFER?

A: This answer is not clear-cut. According to health experts at the Mayo Clinic,

there is growing evidence of potential health benefits of organic foods, including:

- Small to moderate increases in nutrients such as flavonoids.
- Lower detectable levels of pesticide residue. Safety regulations also keep residue levels low in conventional products, making it difficult to detect differences in health outcomes.
- Higher omega-3 fatty acids (the heart-healthy ones) in organic animal products. This could be due to more grass in the animals' diets.

Meanwhile, the overall risk of bacterial contamination of organic foods is the same as conventional, according

to Mayo Clinic experts.

Q: WHAT ABOUT THE COST COMPARISON?

A: Organic foods typically cost more. Farming practices may require more hand labor, less mechanization and sometimes lower yields. Organic products are often processed and transported in smaller quantities, increasing the cost per unit.

Learn more about the future of American food production, including organic and conventional farming practices, with the FFA #SpeakAg Dialogue videos on [FFA.org](https://www.ffa.org).

— By Gene Johnston

NATIONAL FFA OFFICER Q&A



2019 MARKS 50 YEARS SINCE WOMEN WERE GRANTED FULL MEMBERSHIP IN FFA. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO THE FUTURE OF FFA TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME AND FEEL COMFORTABLE CONTRIBUTING?



Luke O'Leary



NATIONAL FFA PRESIDENT

FFA has been around for over 90 years. During that time, our country and world have changed dramatically. From advancements in technology to changing demographics, FFA must continue to accept any and all unique perspectives to continue to remain not only relevant but also powerful in its impact on students' lives. FFA is a home. It is a space where students can be comfortable being who they are while being challenged to grow. We are leaders. Leaders who identify with all races, with all genders, with LGBTQ+ and more. We are FFA.



Layni LeBlanc



NATIONAL FFA SECRETARY

FFA will continue to evolve, just like agriculture. When we create a culture where all ideas and opinions are welcome, collaboration and innovation grow. I hope to see a continual progression in our organization where everyone is welcome no matter their background, lifestyle or identity. As I've heard many times before, it's important that everyone has a seat at the table in agriculture and in FFA, because different voices and perspectives truly unlock a group's ability to spark positive change.



Jordan Stowe



SOUTHERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

It is so important to create an environment where all members are welcome because, if I have learned anything, it is that agriculture affects everyone. Agriculture speaks all languages, it recognizes all backgrounds and it makes our entire world continue forward. Without it, we would have nothing. Every student deserves a place to belong, and what better place is there than FFA? Everyone is capable and responsible when it comes to learning about the agriculture industry.



Adrian Schunk



EASTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

Our organization's culture is built upon personal growth. However, in order for people to grow, I believe they must first be accepted and encouraged for who they already are. If we would like to continue to build a culture of growth in our organization, we must continue authentically welcoming others. If we cannot be real with who we are, then we cannot achieve real growth beside the people around us.



Ridge Hugbanks



CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT

Agriculture's landscape is ever changing. As FFA grows and expands, so does the need to ensure that all voices are heard in our pursuit of progress as an organization. Whether you're a multigenerational farmer or rancher, or someone with no background in agriculture, we need every individual to play a role in sharing perspectives and furthering FFA. Let's listen to understand, not just respond.



Shea Booster



WESTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

An inclusive and open environment is critical to the success of FFA – not only as an agricultural leadership organization, but also as an organization that focuses on preparing youth for lifelong learning and development. It doesn't matter where members live, what they drive or the price tag on their clothes. It's the drive, passion and character that members bring to the table that make a difference.

FOOD WASTE: BY THE NUMBERS

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, WE THROW AWAY A HUGE AMOUNT OF OUR NATION'S MOST IMPORTANT AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT: FOOD. IT IS THE SINGLE BIGGEST ITEM BEING BULLDOZED IN OUR LANDFILLS, SAYS THE USDA. BUT SLOWLY, SOCIETY IS WAKING UP TO THIS WASTEFULNESS AND SEEKING SOLUTIONS, SOME OF WHICH ARE BEING LED BY FFA MEMBERS. CONSIDER THESE STATISTICS. • BY GENE JOHNSTON

THE EXTENT OF FOOD WASTE



31 PERCENT

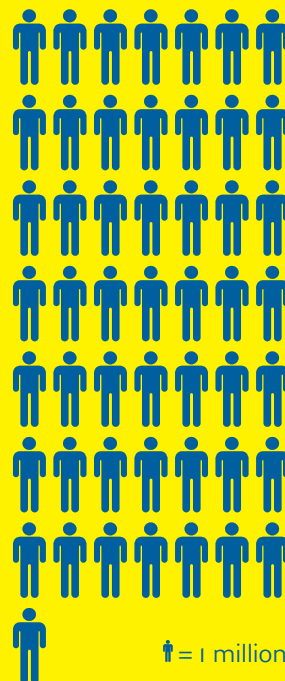
of food produced for home, restaurant and school consumption ends up in landfills.

218

pounds of food are wasted per person per year in the U.S.

DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (INCLUDING THE U.S.) **WASTE** NEARLY AS MUCH FOOD AS THE TOTAL PRODUCED IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.

AT LEAST 50 MILLION PEOPLE COULD LIVE OFF OF THE FOOD WE WASTE IN THE U.S. PER YEAR.



Developed countries waste

10 TIMES

as much food per person as nondeveloped countries.

3 CHAPTERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

CUBA-RUSHFORD FFA CHAPTER, CUBA, N.Y.

Agricultural education students started a school-wide composting project after they noticed how much food was going uneaten at breakfast and lunch. "We wish the students were eating the food, but at least we're keeping the leftovers out of the landfill," says FFA advisor Carly Santangelo. "Some students are even composting at home now."

CENTRAL JR. HIGH FFA, SPRINGDALE, ARK.

Students saw a connection between the food being wasted at school and agriculture, so they built a compost bin from pallets. "It's a hands-on opportunity to learn," says agriculture educator Kathy Hall. "One student is even building a biogas digester using food waste. I'm hopeful that some students will see career opportunities in this field."

LONE STAR FFA, OTIS, COLO.

Agricultural education students get food from a local food pantry called Food Bank of the Rockies and distribute it to the community. "Students learn about using food rather than wasting it and also about serving our community. It's all good," says FFA advisor Saralynn Vetter.

5

SUSTAINABLE FFA SPONSORS

Check out how some of our sponsors create sustainable food, fuel, pet food and more. Just hover your phone's camera over each icon.

CARGILL



DARLING INGREDIENTS



GROWTH ENERGY



SEALED AIR



TYSON



4 COMMONLY WASTED FOODS



BREAD



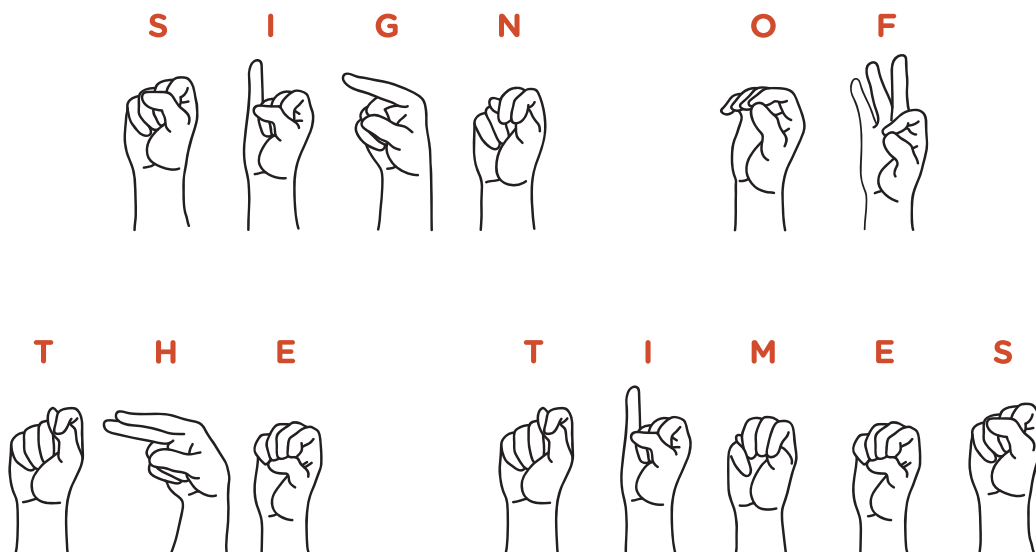
FRUITS & VEGETABLES



MEATS



DAIRY



In an important step to ensure FFA is a place where all people can prepare for leadership and career success, the North Carolina School for the Deaf became the third FFA chapter in the nation for members who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Story by Jodi Helmer • Photography by Tyler Smith

Although the North Carolina School for the Deaf was established in 1894 and was once the site of a productive farm with massive vegetable gardens and a herd of dairy cattle, lessons about agriculture were not part of the curriculum. “No one has ever been here to teach students about food and agriculture,” says Reid Ledbetter, the agricultural education teacher and FFA advisor at the North Carolina School for the Deaf. “Given the history of the land, it made sense to have an agricultural education program here.” In 2018, as part of an effort to ramp up its career and technical education program, the North Carolina School for the Deaf launched an agricultural education program for students in middle and high schools. Ledbetter

chartered the first FFA chapter in school history, which also became just the third school for the deaf in the nation to have an FFA chapter.

“FFA is about leadership, hands-on learning and STEM education,” Ledbetter says. “If we wanted to have a complete aged program, FFA needed to be part of it.”

Students Dig In

The North Carolina School for the Deaf FFA Chapter accomplished a lot in its first season. The 106-acre grounds sprouted a new garden and a high-tunnel greenhouse that produced fruits and vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, potatoes, sweet potatoes, cabbage and blueberries. Younger students grew snow peas in a square bale garden.

Students are responsible for all aspects of production – from planting seeds to tending plants to harvesting. The





among the cows, pigs, goats, horses, chickens and rabbits at her grandparents' farm, but she appreciated classes on plant and animal sciences, and the chance to put those lessons into action on the school farm.

"My friends encouraged me to join FFA because it was fun learning outside the classroom," she says through a sign language interpreter.

Carson developed an immediate affinity for agricultural education and became the vice president of the North Carolina School for the Deaf FFA Chapter.

Member KaZoua Vue, 18, has a small flock of chickens at home, and she loves working with the chicks at the North Carolina School for the Deaf. The agricultural education program purchased eight chickens this spring and plans to continue adding to the flock. When the hens start laying, the eggs will be distributed through the school food bank.

"I like weighing the chickens and watching them change each week," Vue says.

Left: George Righter, Rebecca Carson and KaZoua Vue say, "We love FFA!" Opposite, bottom: Advisor Reid Ledbetter signs. "Students learn by getting out there and doing things, so we try to incorporate as many hands-on activities as we can," he says.

gardens do not grow enough fresh fruits and vegetables to serve all of the students living on campus, so the produce is distributed to families of students through the onsite food bank. Students take bags of fresh food home on weekends. Growing food on the campus is about more than feeding families in need, Ledbetter says.

"Students learn best by getting out there and trying new things, so we try to incorporate as many hands-on activities as we can," he says. "Most of the students at our school are from cities or urban areas and have never had these opportunities before."

High school senior Rebecca Carson spent a lot of time

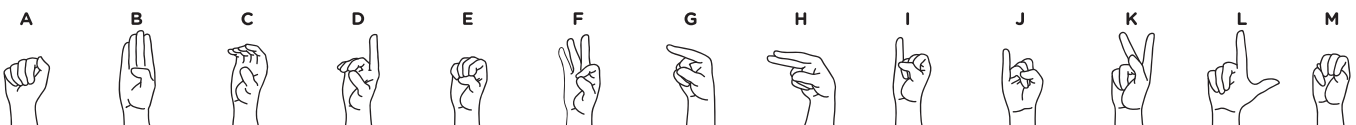
Too Good to Pass Up

The FFA chapter is growing as fast as the chicks.

The North Carolina School for the Deaf serves deaf and hard of hearing students from 43 North Carolina counties. The FFA chapter, which started with just 10 students, has almost doubled in size and earned an award at the state FFA convention for the biggest increase in membership. Two students attended the North Carolina state FFA convention to accept the award.

For students such as high school senior and chapter president George Righter, 18, the chance to get their hands dirty while connecting with the source of their foods was too good to pass up.

"My first year in agriculture science applications class was my first real experience in agriculture," he says through a sign





A Movement for Deaf Members

The North Carolina School for the Deaf was the third school for deaf and hard of hearing students to charter an FFA chapter. So which were the first two?



The agricultural education program and FFA chapter at the West Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in Romney, W.Va., dates back to the 1960s. Members learn welding, learn how to hatch chickens and tend the flock, work in the greenhouse and more. During an annual plant sale each spring, students sell the annuals, vegetables and hanging baskets they grew in the greenhouse.

"In its heyday, the school had a fully operational farm on campus with a bakery, dairy, processing facility and greenhouses," says West Virginia School for the Deaf agricultural education teacher and FFA advisor Amanda Whitacre. "Our students still love to do things with their hands and grow things. It provides a sense of accomplishment."

The Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville, Ky., started its agricultural education program and FFA chapter in 2009, turning part of its 23-acre campus into an outdoor classroom for students interested in getting hands-on education in agriscience.

language interpreter. "It's important for all students to know where their food comes from. I like working outside planting the potatoes, and I have an interest in teaching and STEM education."

All of the FFA members and agricultural education students are excited to learn more about agriculture and participate in activities such as growing vegetables, raising chickens, growing gourds, and making birdhouses and grapevine wreaths, Ledbetter says.

Students learned about mechanics in the agriculture science applications class, and they had the chance to see all of the latest high-tech farm equipment during field trips to the Southern Farm Show in 2018 and 2019.

"We try to do all of the things other chapters would do," Ledbetter says. "We participate in local, regional and state activities and plan to attend the next National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis."

Community Assistance

Ledbetter has a long history in agriculture and education. He participated in FFA in high school and worked on the dairy research farm while studying agricultural education and animal science at



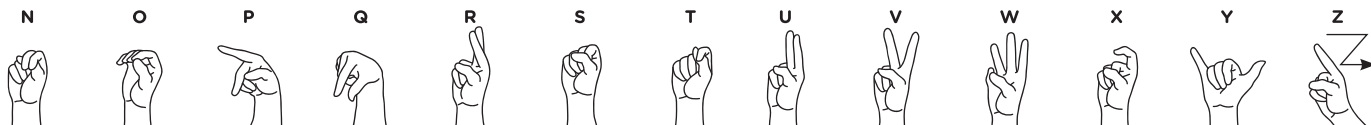
North Carolina State University. He is also a first-generation dairy farmer, and he taught agricultural education in Iredell and Scotland counties. He had no background, however, in sign language when he accepted the position at the North Carolina School for the Deaf.

In his first year in the classroom, Ledbetter taught with the help of an interpreter. He spent the last two years taking American Sign Language classes and can now communicate with students in ASL.

In addition to communicating with students, Ledbetter has spread the word about the new agricultural education program and FFA chapter in the local community, and he's thrilled with the amount of support the school has received.

The North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund and Carolina Farm Credit provided grants to help the school purchase a hoop house, garden tools and FFA jackets. The Burke County Beekeepers Association donated a beehive and bees. The Burke County Master Gardeners paid the FFA dues for the fledgling chapter. Farm Bureau donated copies of its 2019 Book of the Year for students.

"The community sees it as a really great opportunity to connect with the school and the students," Ledbetter says. "There is a lot of excitement about the program. We're small but growing. I'm the ag teacher so I might be biased, but there is no other program this school could start that would give these students such amazing opportunities." •





The SPIRIT *of* GIVING

AS THE NATIONAL FFA FOUNDATION CELEBRATES 75 YEARS, THIS FORMER NATIONAL OFFICER REFLECTS ON WHY SHE GIVES BACK.

Although FFA provided Taylor (McNeel) Wiseman with countless skills and opportunities, she believes the spirit of giving was one of the most powerful.

A tornado ripped through her hometown of Vilonia, Ark., when Wiseman was in the 10th grade at Vilonia High School, and the response from FFA was swift.

“Our FFA chapter went out to make sure our neighbors were OK and checked on all of the farmers to make sure their livestock was safe and had shelter and feed,” recalls Wiseman, who served as the 2015-16 national president. “It was the most amazing example of service coming to life to see people coming together when our town had been ripped apart.”

The Vilonia FFA Chapter received countless letters and donations from other chapters nationwide, helping the entire community feel supported in its struggle to rebuild. The experience — and the connection to FFA members near and far — solidified Wiseman’s commitment to FFA and her desire to

give back to the organization.

“It takes all kinds of people with all kinds of resources to make FFA work,” she says. “I was so proud to participate in volunteer projects, leadership camps, and state and national conventions, and I want to give back.”

Anyone can provide support financially through the National FFA Foundation. The foundation, which celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, gives financial support to provide blue

jackets for FFA members in need, scholarships, Living to Serve grants and more.

Wiseman was the recipient of two national FFA scholarships that helped her achieve her goals as an

undergraduate at Southern Arkansas University. As she pursues a graduate degree in agricultural economics at the University of Arkansas and serves as chair of the National FFA Alumni and Supporters advisory committee, she has prioritized contributing to the FFA foundation.

It feels good to give back, Wiseman explains, because her contributions help other high school students who share a passion for agriculture.

“The FFA foundation is made up of people who believe in FFA and have the passion and the talents to make sure these experiences are possible,” she says. “Their commitment ensures that agricultural education instructors, FFA advisors and FFA members can focus on what they do best, which is being leaders in their communities. It’s important for us, as alumni, to show up, volunteer and, if we can, donate.”

Learn more about the National FFA Foundation at FFA.org/National-FFA-Foundation.

— By Jodi Helmer

“IT WAS THE MOST AMAZING EXAMPLE OF SERVICE COMING TO LIFE TO SEE PEOPLE COMING TOGETHER WHEN OUR TOWN HAD BEEN RIPPED APART.”
— TAYLOR WISEMAN

CAREER *Success*

CHANGING LIVES THROUGH AG ED

HERE ARE FOUR INSPIRING TEACHERS WHO MAKE PRICELESS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEIR STUDENTS, CHAPTERS AND COMMUNITIES.

What is the value of a good teacher? Anyone fortunate enough to have had a quality agriculture teacher knows the answer: That person is priceless. While a teacher's commitment and dedication are showcased daily, on National Teach Ag Day, we recognize the qualities and passion that all agriculture teachers bring to the classroom.

— By Bev Flatt

Keonté EDMONDS,

who grew up on a beef cattle farm in Virginia, has been an agriculture teacher at Heritage High School in Wake Forest, N.C., for the past six years. While he originally pursued a future as a veterinarian, the National Teacher Ambassador for FFA participated in college organizations that led him into the classroom.

"I THINK ABOUT THE END GOAL FOR MY STUDENTS, RATHER THAN IMMEDIATE SUCCESS," EDMONDS SAYS. "WHILE ALL SUCCESS IS BENEFICIAL, AS A NONTRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER, I STRIVE TO MAKE THE CONTENT MORE RELEVANT TO ALL STUDENTS NO MATTER WHAT CAREER THEY MAY GO INTO."



Jillian GORDON BRYANT

fell in love with FFA after her advisor convinced her to compete in Creed speaking. After serving as a Pennsylvania state FFA officer, she changed her major from music business to agricultural education and has never looked back.

"THROUGH AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, I AM ABLE TO CREATE PERSONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES THAT NO OTHER TEACHER IS ABLE TO," SAYS GORDON BRYANT, WHO SERVES AS THE FFA ADVISOR AT CLARKE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL IN ATHENS, GA. "NOT ONLY DO I GET TO WATCH THEM GROW, BUT ALSO MY STUDENTS PUSH ME EVERY DAY TO BE A BETTER PERSON AND TEACHER."

Isaiah GOVEA

says one of the best parts about being an agriculture teacher is that no two days are ever the same.

"AGRICULTURE TEACHERS HAVE A UNIQUE JOB," GOVEA SAYS. "WE GET TO SPEND FOUR YEARS WITH OUR STUDENTS, TRAVEL ACROSS THE STATE AND NATION, AND HAVE COUNTLESS IMPACTFUL MOMENTS DURING THEIR TIME AS OUR STUDENTS."

In his second year at AAEC South Mountain High School in Phoenix, Ariz., Govea's chapter has been recognized as one of the top FFA chapters in the state.



Allison

MEADOWS knew becoming an agriculture teacher was always the plan.

"AS A FRESHMAN IN HIGH SCHOOL, I HAD AN AGRICULTURE TEACHER WHO MENTIONED TO ME THAT I WOULD BE A GREAT AGRICULTURE TEACHER, AND I NEVER LOOKED BACK," MEADOWS SAYS. "SHE MADE HER JOB LOOK EFFORTLESS, FUN AND A WORTHWHILE INVESTMENT TO IMPACT THE FUTURE. I DON'T EVEN THINK I HAD A BACKUP PLAN."

Nine years later, Meadows has still never looked back. She spends her days changing lives at Sherwood High School in Oregon.



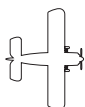
Read more about these teachers in an extended article at FFA.org/TeacherProfiles. To learn more about agricultural education careers, visit AgExplorer.com and NAAE.org/teachag.



THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

BOX ELDER FFA MEMBERS IN UTAH GAIN THE POWER OF FLIGHT DURING HIGH SCHOOL AVIATION COURSES.

BY JESSICA WALKER BOEHM
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF NOBLE



At Box Elder High School (BEHS) in Brigham City, Utah, Box Elder FFA members have the unique opportunity to take aviation classes and learn about the many ways aviation technology applies to the industry of agriculture. As a result, several students are realizing a newfound passion for aviation while becoming more acquainted with the latest and greatest in ag technology. It's a cool combination that's sure to help them soar in the future.

"The world of technology and its place in agriculture is only getting bigger, and aviation is certainly a critical part of that," says Jason Bingham, BEHS agriculture instructor, Box Elder FFA co-advisor and a licensed pilot. "Offered in concurrent enrollment with the Utah State University (USU) College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, and serving as introductory classes for the USU aviation technology program, our aviation courses at BEHS are helping open students' eyes to the possibilities that stand before them, including several careers they often didn't even know existed. They get hands-on experience with drones, flight simulators and other high-tech equipment, and many are flying airplanes under supervision and accumulating flight hours. Plus, they are earning college credit at very little

expense and are learning skills that can help them acquire a private pilot license. This is an excellent opportunity for our students, and we're proud to offer these courses."

STUDENTS FLY HIGH

Available to juniors and seniors since the 2016-17 academic year, BEHS has two aviation courses: The Aviation Profession and Private Pilot Ground School. Both courses last one trimester. To enroll, students must have a grade point average of at least 3.0, and students are required to complete The Aviation Profession before beginning Private Pilot Ground School.

The Aviation Profession, described by Bingham as an "exploratory course," covers a wide variety of topics such as career planning and certification processes. It essentially serves as an introduction to the aviation industry. After completing the course, students earn one USU credit and half a BEHS career and technical education (CTE) credit.

"The Aviation Profession is designed to expose students to as many careers in aviation as possible," Bingham says. "We usually bring in 15 to 20 guest speakers who talk to the students about their careers in the field – everyone from Air Force and commercial pilots to mechanics, air traffic controllers and crop dusters. There are hundreds of careers in aviation, so we're really just scratching the surface."

Private Pilot Ground School, on the other hand, is more intense, according to Bingham. The course helps prepare students for flight training, focusing on principles of flight, and aircraft and engine operation. Students learn about topics such as aerodynamics, airport systems, air traffic control procedures, air navigation and flight physiology – basically everything they might need to know to pass the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Private Pilot-Airplane test.

Members Jenny Benitez-Raya (left) and Alec Hendricks (right) participated in the Box Elder High School aviation program, taught by Jason Bingham (center).



When students complete the course, they walk away with five USU credits and one BEHS CTE credit.

“Private Pilot Ground School is specifically for students who are interested in becoming pilots, and they receive some simulated flight instruction,” Bingham says. In this class, they also get to fly the school’s unmanned aerial vehicles – six small drones and four large drones, some of which are used for crop surveying and imagery. “Students have opportunities to fly over our school’s orchard and alfalfa field and use the sprayer drone [Agras MG-1S] on our athletic fields and some local farms. Many farmers use drones to apply things like pesticides, herbicides and liquid fertilizers. There’s no denying that drones are becoming an increasingly important part of agriculture and farming,

so any student interested in working in the ag industry can benefit greatly from taking this course.”

Another perk: During the summertime, BEHS aviation students and those in the school’s summer agricultural program use drones to practice aerial mapping on nearby farms.

“We’re hoping to share the images and plant health data we glean with the farmers who have been gracious enough to allow us to use their farms,” Bingham says. “What we find might shed some light on any issues they’re having with their crops, and it’s an excellent way for students to get real-world experience.”

CAREERS IN AVIATION

After enrolling in both The Aviation Profession and Private Pilot Ground School during his junior year, Alec Hendricks, now

a former Box Elder FFA member who graduated in May, plans to earn his commercial pilot license and pursue a bachelor’s degree in aviation technology at USU.

During his time at BEHS, Hendricks completed an internship with a crop duster at Brigham City Municipal Airport, which also served as his supervised agricultural experience (SAE). In the future, he is interested in putting his aviation skills to work in a career in resource and wildlife management – a profession that entails

Top, left: Classroom instruction includes flight simulation. Top, right: Bingham explains flight instruments to his students.

Bottom: Benitez-Raya and Bingham review before a flight.

Opposite: Benitez-Raya, Bingham and Williams with drones, which are also part of the program.

spraying invasive species, removing exotic plants, surveying animals and more, the majority of which is done using an airplane.

“I learned so much in my aviation classes, particularly Private Pilot Ground School,” says Hendricks,



“I’VE DISCOVERED THAT AVIATION IS SO MUCH MORE THAN COMMERCIAL AIRLINE FLYING.” – JENNY BENITEZ-RAYA

WATCH OUR VIDEO

Hover your phone's camera over this code to learn more about the Box Elder High School aviation program.



who also credits the BEHS aviation courses with introducing him to FFA. "It was a rigorous course that required a lot of hard work and study time, but now I can say that I have a strong understanding of meteorology as well as how an airplane works. How many other people my age can say that?"

Former Box Elder FFA member Jacob Williams also completed both The Aviation Profession and Private Pilot Ground School, and he plans to study aviation at Southern Utah University. At 18 years old, he's already passed the FAA Private Pilot-Airplane test and credits his aviation coursework at BEHS with helping make that dream a reality.

"Mr. Bingham and his aviation classes really helped prepare me for the FAA Private Pilot-Airplane test – one of the toughest written exams I've ever taken," Williams says. "We had small class sizes, so I got a good amount of one-on-one time with him and was able to ask questions about anything that came up. I don't think I could have passed that test without all of his instruction and assistance."

Jenny Benitez-Raya, one of only two female students to take and finish BEHS aviation courses to date, also

plans to become a commercial pilot after attending USU, but she says she's open to other career paths in aviation – especially now that she knows how many are available to her.

"In these classes, I learned so much about aviation technology and how we can apply it to industries like agriculture," says Benitez-Raya, who was also a member of the Box Elder FFA and graduated in 2019. "For example, I never knew how drones could be used to help improve yields on farms. I've discovered that aviation is so much more than commercial airline flying, although that's still what I want to do, but now I know about the many other career opportunities I could pursue, as well."

In addition, Benitez-Raya says taking aviation classes at BEHS has helped her grow into a stronger leader, giving her tools that will likely prove useful no matter where her career path leads.

"When I'm flying an airplane or a drone, there's a lot of pressure, and I've learned how to manage that stress," she says. "I've also learned to take charge when I need to, and I know that's going to be valuable going forward." •

Learn more about career opportunities in aviation at **AgExplorer.com**.

AVIATION CAREERS

Point your phone's camera at this icon to visit **AgExplorer.com** and learn more about careers in the aviation industry.



Unmanned aerial vehicles, more commonly known as drones, are growing more and more important to the industry of agriculture. In fact, a recent study shows the agricultural drone market is expected to grow by more than 38 percent by 2025, and it's easy to see why.

Many of today's drones employ state-of-the-art technology that gives farmers the ability to monitor their crops from the sky and take a closer look at what's happening beneath the surface, far beyond what the naked eye can see. This eliminates the guesswork and helps farmers make better choices, typically resulting in enhanced production.

For example, some drones are equipped with multispectral cameras that provide insight into a crop's growth, while others can retrieve data related to soil characteristics like temperature, moisture, slope and elevation.

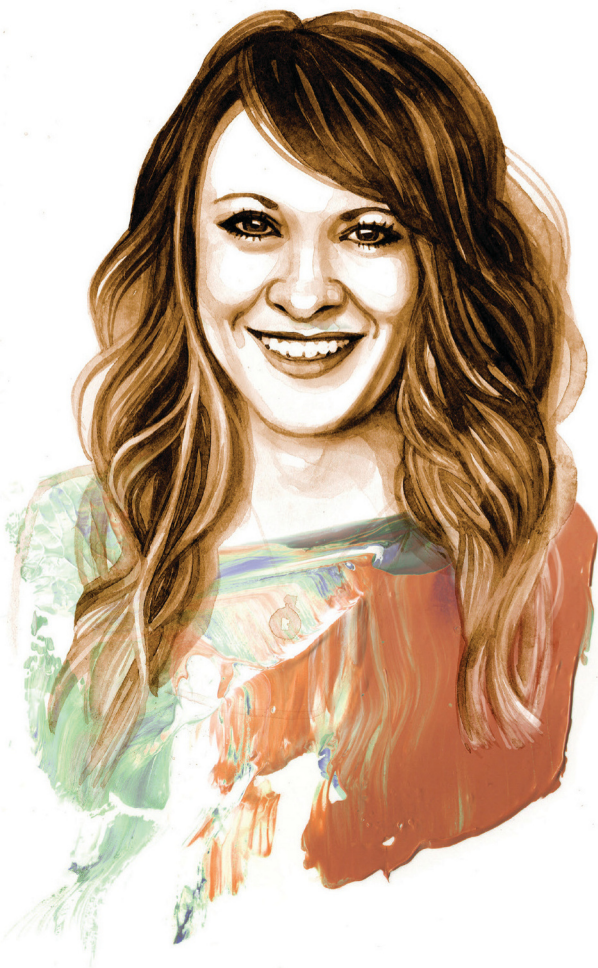
Drones can also gather data related to a crop's fertility and give farmers valuable information that helps them determine how much fertilizer the crop needs in order to grow optimally – and some drones can apply that fertilizer, too, along with pesticides and herbicides.

Finally, drones are also useful in livestock monitoring and give farmers the luxury of quickly examining their herds while also keeping an eye out for predators.

Check IN to a Lifelong Community

FFA members may eventually shed the blue corduroy jacket, but the impact of their time in the organization stays with them forever. Here, four FFA Alumni Check IN to share memories, lessons learned and opportunities afforded by their FFA membership.

By Jami Stall • Illustrations by Annick Poirier



Mollie Branch
Aspermont, Texas

When FFA Alumni track the trajectory of their success, it often leads directly back to their years of blue and gold. The vast and varied lessons learned in FFA – on everything from poultry cuts to public speaking to parliamentary procedure – have helped shape the futures of more than 8 million individuals.

Launched this February, the Check IN campaign offers a digital space to reconnect with the organization, offers life updates and engages in the support of the future of agriculture. Already nearly 20,000 FFA Alumni and Supporters have visited FFA.org/CheckIN to share news of careers, relationships and other successes. Others have posted memories on social media using #FFACheckIN.

Here, four former members check in with *FFA New Horizons* about their FFA memories and how their FFA experiences are reflected in their lives today.

“I have no doubt that FFA put me on a path to starting my own company,” says Mollie (Dykes) Branch, a former member of the Lake Hamilton FFA Chapter in Percy, Ark. “I am so grateful for the National FFA and Arkansas FFA for advancing my agricultural knowledge and leadership skills, for introducing me to people all over the country (including my husband, Riley) and for helping mold me into the person I am today.”

Branch met her future husband 10 years ago when she was running for Arkansas FFA state officer. He was a Texas FFA state officer and a national officer.

“Funny enough, his first impression of me was, ‘Who does this girl think she is?’ because I was making a somewhat bold move, running for a higher-level office than what I had been slated for,” Branch says.

Their #FFAlovestory, as she calls it, didn’t begin until the two reconnected on Facebook several years later and realized how much they had in common. Then, following a two-year long-distance relationship, he proposed, and they married in Jamaica a year later. Now in Aspermont, Texas, he owns a law practice, and she owns and operates Emerge EdComm, a marketing and curriculum development company dedicated to serving agricultural businesses and organizations across the country.

“It was through my time in FFA and as a state officer that I found my passion for helping others share their stories and messages,” Branch says. “I built a great network of peers and mentors that I still connect with and work with today. Beyond my passion for the agriculture industry, I also believe that my work ethic today is a direct result of my FFA career. It allowed me to build my dream from the ground up.

“From riding in the ag ed department truck for countless hours to studying chicken cuts for poultry judging to visiting with legislators on Capitol Hill during National Ag Day, my time in this amazing organization will never be forgotten.”



**Jacobi
Bedenfield**
Gainesville, Fla.

High school presented countless opportunities for Jacobi Bedenfield. Too many, perhaps. “Before FFA, I had no idea what direction I wanted my life to go,” he says. “I was playing multiple sports and joining several clubs, but I still felt like something was missing – until I joined FFA. I was enrolled in an agricultural education course, and my ag teacher (who was also the FFA advisor) saw something in me; she saw how other students looked to me for leadership. So she encouraged me to get more involved in FFA to sharpen my leadership skills and my ability to be a voice for others.”

Bedenfield, who was a member of the West Florida FFA Chapter, followed his teacher’s advice and says he found his purpose within the organization after becoming chapter officer and eventually a 2014-15 Florida FFA state officer. “My purpose is to lead, serve and give people hope. Today, I understand that FFA is the organization that just keeps on giving,” Bedenfield says. “While I was a state officer, the FFA Alumni continued to pour into my life and provide support and resources that helped me throughout the year. I knew that after I unzipped my blue corduroy jacket, the alumni association would be the place for me.”

Bedenfield currently serves as an at-large director for the Florida FFA Association Board of Directors. He is also the southern region representative for the National FFA Alumni and Supporters Advisory Committee, and he represents the FFA Alumni and Supporters on the National FFA Foundation Board of Trustees.

“I try to give back as much as possible, whether that means working on the state convention staff, judging CDEs and LDEs or mentoring FFA members,” he adds. “The last line of the FFA motto, living to serve, has truly become my life motto, and I strive to show it daily.”

#FFA Check IN

Teresa Milner

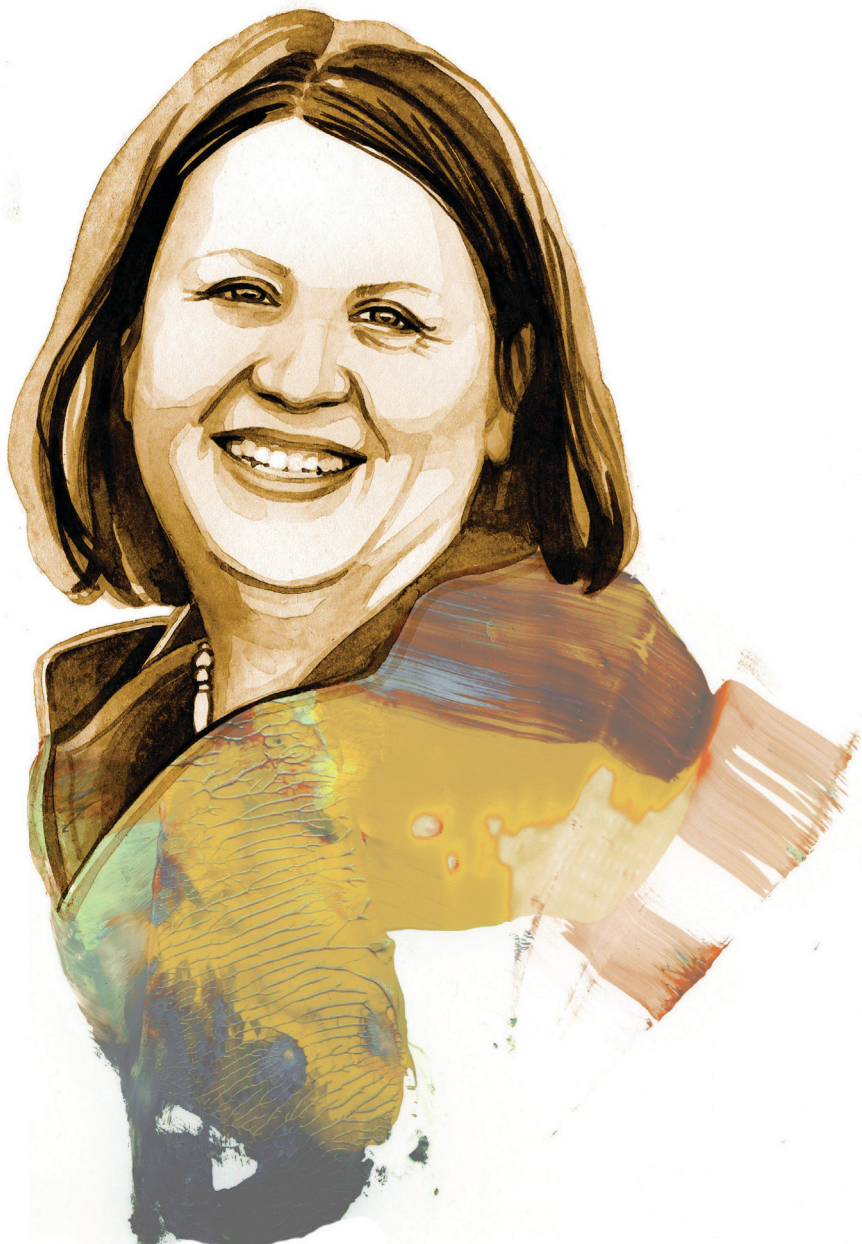
Yoder, Wyo.

Teresa Milner didn't grow up in an ag family, but that didn't stop her from joining one. "FFA was my tribe and where I found my home. Some decisions can literally change the course of your life. For me, that decision was becoming an FFA member," she says. "I was just a girl who loved horses and animals and playing in the dirt. I took an ag class in junior high and I loved it. That class and FFA gave intent to those interests. It was FFA and the activities it offered that connected classroom learning with hands-on experiences, and that hooked me. It was the foundation for the life I'm living now."

Milner's FFA advisor at the Cheyenne FFA Chapter in Wyoming provided guidance toward a career path and college major, which led to an internship with the Wyoming FFA Association. The internship eventually landed her a job with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, where she met her future husband, Ben.

Fast forward to their rural Wyoming life together today. He raises 22,000 pheasants for the state wildlife agency, and she helps wrangle birds, co-parent their 6-year-old daughter and run her business, Dirt Road Wife Photography. She also just wrapped up her 16th year volunteering as the manager of the FFA Wyoming state convention.

"FFA has given me the skills and confidence to walk into any situation and know I am perfectly capable of doing it," she says. "Had I not put on that blue jacket, my life would have been very, very different. That jacket gave me more than just memories. It gave me skills, confidence, friendships and purpose."



Had a Chance to Check IN Yet?

Visit FFA.org/CheckIN and tell us your story using #FFACheckIN. Scan this icon with your phone's camera to go straight there.



Ryan Jacobson is proud to be an FFA Alumni and an American FFA Degree recipient from the Mt. Whitney FFA Chapter in Visalia, Calif. He wanted to Check IN because he is passionate about what FFA does, and he believes in the program.

“My career has been shaped by the experiences gleaned from participating in many programs FFA offers,” Jacobson says. “Competing in judging and speaking contests, as well as developing business-management practices through raising and caring for market animals helped me establish the path I’m on as an adult.”

Today, Jacobson is a regional safety, health and environment manager at Nestlé in Oregon. He credits the positive influences and coaching from his dedicated FFA advisors in high school and college for his professional success.

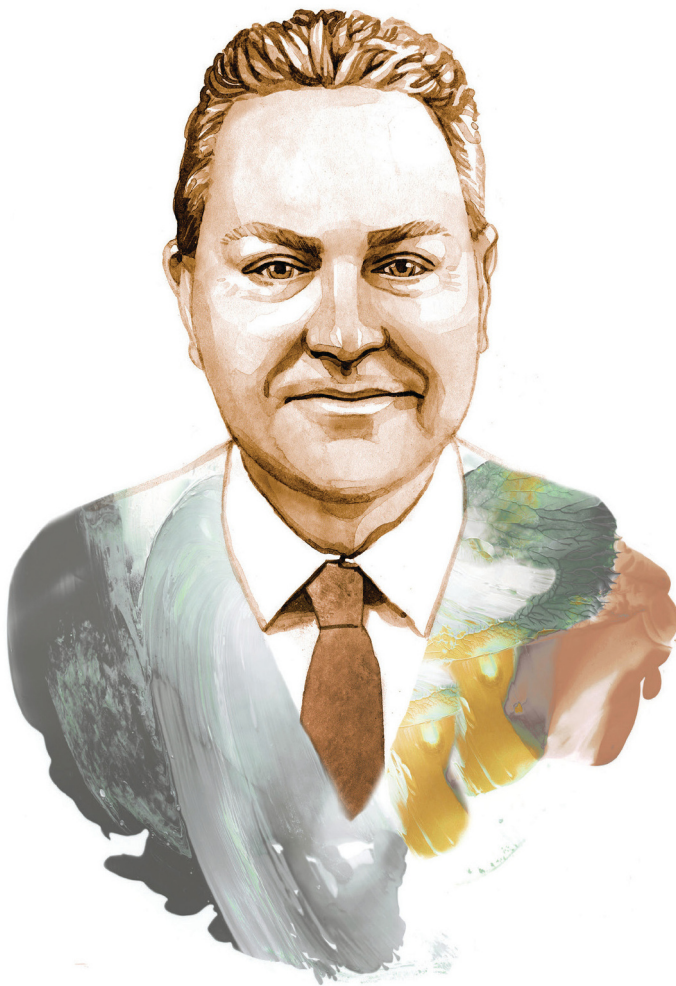
He’s also proud of the FFA heritage his family has developed.

His wife, Edyta Sokol, was also an active FFA member who was named California’s 2017 Star Supporting Staff for her commitment to the Sonoma Valley FFA. He says witnessing his son and daughter following in his footsteps is most gratifying of all. “I have watched with pride as my children served as sectional and regional officers, and established themselves as servant leaders who make a difference in the lives of others,” Jacobson says.

At age 20, his son continues to volunteer at local events to support FFA, and now his 16-year-old daughter participates as chapter president at her high school and serves as northwest Oregon district president.

Ryan Jacobson

Sherwood, Ore.



Former Members #FFACheckIN

Nearly 20,000 former FFA members have checked in at FFA.org to reconnect with the organization. Others have used #FFACheckIN to offer memories of their time in the blue corduroy jacket. Here are just a few.

FFA is the reason for many of the blessings in my life, including my husband, friends I love like family, and my career. Saying “thank you” seems inadequate for the number of laughs, opportunities, connections and friendships I have because of this organization.

– **Catherine Perry**, Vice President of Member Programs and Services at Global Chain Alliance via LinkedIn

I am IN. Great tradition of building a greater future for agriculture.

– **Phil Erdman**, Vice President of Membership at Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation via LinkedIn

Check IN. This is something near and dear to my heart.

– **Todd Freeman** (@4wwest) via Twitter

Calling all former FFA members. Please join us today. Our collective voice will shape a new generation of leaders. We ask for your support to encourage the next generation of agriculturally minded youth – those youth who share our beliefs in modern agriculture and “our ability to serve our own and the public’s interest in producing and marketing the products of our toil.”

– **Dana B. Wood**, AgriScience Instructor and FFA Advisor, Anson High School, Wadesboro, N.C., via LinkedIn

Some of us [FFA Alumni] are located worldwide, as well. Hello from Granada, Nicaragua.

– **Nicki Kost Head**, Granada, Nicaragua via Facebook

I’m checked in! FFA had an enormous impact on my personal and professional development. I encourage other FFA Alumni to participate in the #FFACheckIN at FFA.org/CheckIN.

– **Brooks Hetle** (@brookshetle) via Twitter

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

Fall means sugarcane and syrup for Eufaula FFA. Members grow and process their syrup to present as gifts to faculty and community members.

ALASKA

Alaska FFA hosted a Day of Service project about suicide prevention at the 43rd state convention. Members spread awareness about suicide and shared encouraging messages with other students.

ARIZONA

Casa Grande FFA is raising and processing turkeys to include in meal baskets for families in need. The chapter also partners with a local restaurant to provide recipes.

ARKANSAS

The UA Cossatot Collegiate/Alumni FFA Chapter is addressing student hunger by funding and supplying a food closet on the University of Arkansas Cossatot campus in De Queen.

COLORADO

With only eight members, Karval FFA helps host a Farm Safety Day where elementary students learn responsible agricultural practices, including livestock handling, electrical safety and farm implement management.



CONNECTICUT

In October, Stamford FFA put on a Halloween bash that included a family-oriented fall festival and a haunted house – for those who dared.



DELAWARE

Several chapters have recently established beehives on their campuses to increase bee population, honey production and pollination of nearby crops.

FLORIDA

Members participated in the FFA Forestry Camp at O'Leno State Park in High Springs. The camp started in 1934 and is one of the longest-running camps of its kind in the nation.

GEORGIA

To help get its STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) certification, Harris County FFA members travel to local elementary schools every week to teach students about agriculture and where their food comes from.

HAWAII

Members of Kea'au FFA helped revegetate and restore native Hawaiian dryland forests of which only 5 percent remain on the Hawaiian Islands.

IDAHO

The Clark County FFA Chapter's Day of the Cowboy celebrates cowboy culture with a ranch rodeo, concert and other activities.

ILLINOIS

Seneca FFA hosted the Golden Farmers award night where farmers 70 years old and above were honored for their dedication to production agriculture.

INDIANA

Indiana FFA reached a record-high 12,587 members earlier this year. Congratulations, Indiana FFA!

KANSAS

In September, state and district officers gathered at the Kansas State Fair to care for the Grand Champion livestock and to advocate for agriculture.

KENTUCKY

The Rising Sun Conference brought together about 200 chapter leaders from across the state for two days of goal setting, leadership development and idea sharing.

LOUISIANA

LaSAS FFA is growing native plants that the members will plant as part of a coastal habitat restoration project in south Louisiana and Chile, South America.

MAINE

During a harvest break this fall, Aroostook County students will get time off from school to help farmers with the potato harvest.

MASSACHUSETTS

Bristol FFA now uses drones in its curriculum. Aggie Air teaches students about innovative technology that gives its members a competitive advantage in their future endeavors.

MICHIGAN

Members are judged on their ability to raise a high-quality meat bird, keep records and measure feed efficiency in the annual Broiler Contest.

MINNESOTA

For 17 years, Randolph FFA has organized Minnesota's largest tractor parade. This year, the chapter had 125 entries.

MISSOURI

Show-Me State FFA members showed more than livestock at the Missouri State Fair in August. Over 670 members committed to fighting childhood hunger by packing 100,000 meals on Food Insecurity Day at the fair.

100,000



MONTANA

During the Montana state convention, chapters with ties to Native American culture participated in the American Indian Program. They gave presentations about native history, music and dance.

NEBRASKA

Johnson County Central FFA raised 50 laying hens and donated the eggs to local food pantries. The members also taught elementary students about poultry production.

NEVADA

To manage the feral cat population in Round Mountain, Smoky Valley FFA partners with a local veterinarian to spay, neuter, shelter and put stray cats up for adoption.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

In late September, many of the state's chapters competed in career development events and educated the public about agriculture at the 143rd annual Deerfield Fair.

NEW JERSEY

In November, fall CDEs are held at the Rutgers University School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. Students test their knowledge and skills in land judging, milk quality and products, turf management, and fruit and vegetable identification.

NEW MEXICO

The state is known for its green chiles, so during the fall, members throughout the state roast the peppers for chapter fundraisers.



NORTH CAROLINA

Hawley Middle FFA is installing a raised sweet potato garden bed for the community. Members will host a sweet potato giveaway and a sweet potato cook-off contest. Food and funds will be donated to help those in need.

NORTH DAKOTA

The Oakes/SC, Edgeley-Kulm, Kindred and Hillsboro FFA Chapters received a \$10,000 grant from the North Dakota Department of Agriculture to purchase high tunnels to expand students' horticulture skills.

OHIO

As part of National Farm Safety and Health Awareness Week, Miami East-MVCTC FFA made sure student drivers buckled up as they exited the school's parking lot. The drivers also pocketed a handful of Life Savers candies to remind them that seatbelts are life savers.

OKLAHOMA

Eighth-, ninth- and 10th-grade FFA members traveled to Stillwater to compete in the Opening and Closing Ceremonies Contest, and to learn about various officer duties and the significance of holding regular FFA meetings.

OREGON

Oregon FFA organizes the Tired of Hunger Food Initiative with its foundation partner Les Schwab Tires. Last year, they collected 510,150 pounds of food for those in need.

PUERTO RICO

FFA and 4-H members will soon participate in an initiative called "Creciendo Sembrando" ("Growing Sowing"), where middle and high school students will offer planting workshops to elementary school students year-round.

TENNESSEE

This year marks 90 years that Camp Clements has been in operation for Tennessee FFA members, making it the oldest FFA camp in the nation. More than 1,700 campers gain leadership and agricultural knowledge to serve the state.

TEXAS

This fall, Texas FFA will host its new excellence leadership conferences all over the state to help members discover their unique talents, values and ambitions.



MARYLAND, NEW YORK AND PENNSYLVANIA

The All-American Dairy Show in Harrisburg, Pa., gives members from Maryland, New York and Pennsylvania the opportunity to work with dairy cattle from all across the U.S. and Canada.

UTAH

Members have united by using the FFA motto in hashtag form to show off their learning, doing, earning and serving throughout the year. #learningtoDO #doingtoLEARN #earningtoLIVE #livingtoSERVE

VIRGINIA

Each year, members design floral arrangements and bouquets for the Magna Vista Wedding Show, an event that allows students to gain work experience in a creative way and have their work judged by professional florists.

WISCONSIN

World Dairy Expo hosts FFA Day where members judge contests, participate in scavenger hunts and more.





On the RECORD

Ally Carter is a shining example of how FFA can help propel you into new experiences. After studying agricultural economics in college, the Locust Grove FFA Chapter alumnae from Oklahoma (known then as Sarah Leigh Fogleman) took her pen name and began a new journey writing novels. She's now a New York Times best-selling author who's been published in 20 countries. More than 2 million of her books have sold in the United States.

Q: YOU GREW UP ON A FARM. HOW HAS THAT HELPED YOU IN YOUR WRITING CAREER?

A: Farm kids learn how to do things: 1. work hard and 2. entertain themselves. My imagination and my work ethic are now my bread and butter, and I'm grateful to have learned both at a young age.

Q: WHAT DID YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT FFA?

A: I enjoyed being a part of a community and organization larger than myself – both in the friends I made and the experiences I was lucky enough to enjoy.

Q: IS THERE AN EXAMPLE OF HOW FFA AND YOUR FARM BACKGROUND INSPIRED ONE OF YOUR NOVELS?

A: My first young adult book, *I'd Tell You I Love You, But Then I'd Have to Kill You*, is about a girl who goes to the world's most exclusive spy school. She's exceptional, but I also really wanted to ground her and make her real and relatable. That's why Cammie spends her summers on her grandparents' ranch in Nebraska.

Q: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE STUDENTS ABOUT PURSUING THEIR OWN CAREER PATHS?

A: Never stop learning. You hear a lot of "follow your dreams," and that's good, too! That's definitely what I did. But dreams don't do you any good if you're not putting in the work. No matter where you are in life, there is never a point at which you should stop trying to learn.

Q: WHAT'S ONE BOOK EVERY FFA MEMBER SHOULD READ? WHY?

A: People need to find the book that works for them. Read widely. Read often. And if you're not loving a book, then that's OK. That's just not your book. Keep looking. It's out there.

Ally CARTER

“FARM KIDS LEARN HOW TO DO THINGS: 1. WORK HARD AND 2. ENTERTAIN THEMSELVES. MY IMAGINATION AND MY WORK ETHIC ARE NOW MY BREAD AND BUTTER, AND I'M GRATEFUL TO HAVE LEARNED BOTH AT A YOUNG AGE.”

– ALLY CARTER

– By John Walter



Ag Angle

MONIQUE WESTABY

LOCATION: Jim Falls, Wis.

FFA CHAPTER: Lake Holcombe FFA

INSTAGRAM: @mwphotography33

WEBSITE: facebook.com/mwphotography33

Justin Horton's love and pride for agriculture was obvious throughout our entire senior portrait session; it's no surprise he's in FFA. I really wanted to capture that passion, so when I saw how beautiful the sky silhouetted Justin and the machinery, I knew this was our moment. Farmers work from sunup to sundown with little recognition, but at the end of a long day, they can still stand strong and be proud of their work.

* **SHARE YOUR AG ANGLE WITH US!** It's as simple as completing the submission form at **FFA.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.



WE PROUDLY SUPPORT THE WOMEN OF AGRICULTURE.

On small hobby farms, inside muddy dairy barns and in major commercial ag businesses, women across the country rise to the challenges of agriculture with endless strength and innovation.

Congratulations to the women of the FFA on 50 years of hard-fought membership.



FENDT

 **MASSEY FERGUSON**

RoGator

TerraGator