



NEW

Spring 2019

HORIZONS



50

YEARS *of*
WOMEN *in* **FFA**

THESE 5 LEADERS
AND MANY MORE HAVE
HELPED SHAPE THE
FUTURE OF FFA



LET'S CELEBRATE WOMEN IN FFA!

It's been 50 years since the 1969 National FFA Convention when women gained full membership in the organization. It was a momentous occasion since the path to acceptance was long and fought with courage and diligence. "The push for female membership wasn't an effort led during a single business session of a single National FFA Convention," writes Bev Flatt in "The Fight for Female Membership," page 16. "Rather, it was a feat that required incredible energy and efforts that began more than 30 years earlier." As it is in many other good endeavors, the back-and-forth that followed was tireless and, ultimately, worth it.

In the time since, women have become an integral part of the organization. We regularly see women achieve the most significant milestones in agricultural education and agriculture, and they continue to shape the future.

Consider this brief trajectory: Anita Decker from New York and Patricia Krowicki from New Jersey served as the first female delegates at the 1970 National FFA Convention, just one year after full membership. In 1976, Julie Smiley from Washington became the first woman to serve at the national level as the western region vice president. Since then, more than 80 women have been elected to the National FFA Officer Team. In 1982, Jan Eberly from California was elected to serve as the first female national FFA president. And, Karlene Lindow was the first female to be named the American Star Farmer in 2002. Her FFA jacket now hangs in the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. In 2018, Breanna Holbert was elected the first female African-American national FFA president.

You'll notice that we use many pages in this edition of *FFA New Horizons* to celebrate women in FFA – from the pioneers to the members who carry the torch today. I hope you'll engage with the stories you find here and join us as we commemorate the progress the National FFA Organization has made.

Have a great spring!



Justin Davey
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Volume 67, Number 3

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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.

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THE FFA VISION

Students whose lives are impacted by FFA and agricultural education will achieve academic and personal growth, strengthen American agriculture and provide leadership to build healthy local communities, a strong nation and a sustainable 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.

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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.

TAKING HOME *Top Honors*

ACQUAINT YOURSELF WITH THE SIX 2018 EDUCATORS WHO WON OUTSTANDING AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AWARDS FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS.

CAROLYN PIGUET,  **VINITA HIGH SCHOOL, VINITA, OKLA.**

Students at Vinita High School grow food in a 1-acre garden and serve it in their food truck and catering business. Piguet believes the offerings help students understand the link from farm to table, explaining, “You don’t have to farm to benefit from agricultural literacy.”

NEIL PEARSON,  **WILLMAR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, WILLMAR, MINN.**

Pearson wants students to have access to specialized agricultural programming, from horticulture to engine repair. Pearson has led students on the agriculture mechanics team to eight state championships. “Seeing them succeed is the best part of teaching,” he says.

MATTHEW DETTLOFF,  **CHIEFLAND MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL, CHIEFLAND, FLA.**

Dettloff’s passion for agricultural education is contagious. “FFA is the biggest club on campus; it’s something all of our students want to be part of,” he says. “I love being part of it because I can help students explore their passions outside the classroom.”

WES CRAWFORD,  **SUTHERLIN HIGH SCHOOL, SUTHERLIN, ORE.**

Although Crawford grew up on a farm, most of the 130 students in the Sutherlin High School FFA Chapter are being introduced to agriculture for the first time. “Without an ag ed program,

there wouldn’t be much understanding of the path food takes from farm to plate,” he says.

TAMMY HYATT,  **LAPEER COUNTY EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER, ATTICA, MICH.**

Hyatt does more than teach students about production agriculture and veterinary science. Almost all of the produce and proteins raised on campus are donated to the local food bank. “It’s our work in the community that makes this program special,” she says.

HOLLY HUFFORD,  **SMYRNA MIDDLE SCHOOL, SMYRNA, DEL.**

Many of the 350 students taking agricultural education classes at Smyrna Middle School don’t know the difference between dairy and beef cattle. “I love the shock value of teaching ag ed, the moment when you completely change how a student sees something,” Hufford explains.

— By Jodi Helmer

IS AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION RIGHT FOR YOU?

Visit AgExplorer.com/career/agricultural-science-teacher for job details. Or, visit the National Association of Agricultural Educators’ website, NAAE.org, and click on “Teach Ag.”

FEB.-APR. CALENDAR

Feb. 16-23:

NATIONAL FFA WEEK

National FFA Week is a time for the nation to celebrate the importance and impact of FFA. This year, support Grants for Growing by giving \$1 or more at Tractor Supply Co. store checkouts.

Feb. 19:

GIVE FFA DAY

The National FFA Foundation holds a 24-hour online fundraiser to support FFA and agricultural education. Check out FFA.org/GiveFFADay for more.

Feb. 22:

NATIONAL WEAR BLUE DAY

Use the Friday of FFA Week to show off your FFA pride by wearing blue! Visit FFA.org/FFA-Week.

Mar. 14:

NATIONAL AG DAY

This year’s theme is “Agriculture: Food for Life. How Does Our Nation Lead the Way?” Check out AgDay.org and participate in this special day.

Mar. 29-30:

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Registration closes March 17 at 8 p.m. for this Regional Development Conference in Prescott Valley, Ariz. Visit FFA.org/GoToRDC for details.

Apr. 9-15:

STATE OFFICER INTERVIEWS

State officer applications are generally due at the beginning of April with interviews taking place weeks later. Check your state’s website for exact dates and directions on how to apply.

COOL Quilt

Did you know there are several officially licensed FFA fabric designs available for sale? Ana Blickenderfer created this beautiful quilt (shown right) with fabric from Riley Blake Designs.

“As a certified instructor for Quiltworx, the company that developed this pattern, I do not get to use many of my quilts because I keep them for trunk shows,” Blickenderfer says. “This quilt, however, will be used by me.”

The process of working with FFA fabric was a connection back to Blickenderfer’s roots and reminded her why she does what she does.

“I was a member of the Charles City FFA Chapter in Iowa all four years of high school,” she says. “I served as reporter and participated in many competitions. Without FFA, I never would have started my quilting business.”

The Fractured Star pattern used here is available at Quiltworx.com.

– By Josh Cook



Quiz: FARM IDIOMS

– By Jessica Mozo

Can you translate this barnyard of agriculture-related idioms?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. From the horse’s mouth | A. Something is never going to happen. |
| 2. Knee-high by the Fourth of July | B. For a very long time. |
| 3. When pigs fly | C. Something has grown as tall as it should. |
| 4. A hard row to hoe | D. Coming from the original source. |
| 5. Bring home the bacon | E. Something that is extremely difficult to do. |
| 6. Until the cows come home | F. To earn money needed for living. |

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



SOCIAL MEDIA MAVENS

THESE ACCOUNTS ARE RUN
BY WOMEN WITH TIES TO FFA.
FOLLOW AND LIKE THEM TO BE
INSPIRED AND INFORMED!



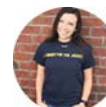
Artha Jonassaint
@akj_8

The president of the Florida FFA Association travels all over the state. Tag along for the ride!



Chyenno Deno
@chyenne.deno

Follow along as Deno serves as state reporter for the Indiana FFA Association.



Anna Brown
@annagraceybrown

Brown shows off her run as Tennessee state reporter and a member of the #FFAStyleSquad. Use her discount code for 20 percent off at **ShopFFA.org**.



Andrea Escher
@andreaa.escher

Escher provides regular dispatches as she navigates being a district sentinel in Minnesota.



Laurie Link
@laurie_countrylinked

This fourth-generation farmer from Missouri shares photos of her family, animals and other moments on the farm.



AJ Teasley
@avajaneteasley

Teasley shares her year as Georgia's state FFA north region vice president. Also a member of the #FFAStyleSquad, use her discount code for 20 percent off at **ShopFFA.org**.



LIONS AND TIGERS AND RHINOS,

Oh My!

Six FFA members from Kalamazoo County, Mich., got up close and personal with elusive wild African animals last August. The students came from four schools but were all enrolled in the Kalamazoo Regional Education Service Agency's Veterinary Science program of the KRESA South FFA Chapter. Together they embarked on a two-week journey to Hoedspruit, South Africa, to study with wildlife veterinarians at the Vets and Wildlife/Selati Vet Experience. Students assisted veterinarians in performing health checks, preparing animals for transport, administering dewormers and antibiotics, applying parasite medications, injecting microchips and treating wounds.

"Because the animals are wild, this involved darting them with tranquilizers first, then quickly accomplishing the tasks before the animals awoke," says Noreen

Heikes, a veterinarian, FFA advisor and veterinary science teacher who accompanied the students on the trip. "We had hands-on experiences with lions, a cheetah, elephants, giraffes, a rhino and a hippo (which is the deadliest animal in Africa)."

James Porter, a graduate of Gull Lake High School, says the trip boosted his interest in working toward becoming a licensed veterinary technician.

"Every experience left me in pure amazement," he says. "I would go back in a heartbeat."

For Brooklyn Joslyn, a 2018 graduate of Portage Central High School, the best part of the trip was the realization that she was meant to pursue a career helping wildlife.

"Nothing about vaccinating a wild sable in South Africa should be normal," Joslyn says. "But after a day or two, doing that vet work just felt right. It proves I am meant to put this career in my life."

— By Jessica Mozo

**"WE HAD HANDS-ON
EXPERIENCES WITH
LIONS, A CHEETAH,
ELEPHANTS, GIRAFFES,
A RHINO AND A HIPPO
(WHICH IS THE DEADLIEST
ANIMAL IN AFRICA)."**
— NOREEN HEIKES

GROW IN THE CITY

THIS FFA CHAPTER PROVES URBAN GARDENS CAN PRODUCE PLENTY OF PRODUCE.

You don't need to have acres of tillable land to grow a bumper crop of vegetables. FFA members at Green Street Academy in Baltimore, Md., produce food on a campus surrounded by row houses, convenience stores and busy intersections. Agriscience teacher and FFA advisor Cole Bishop offers four tips for growing a successful urban garden.

1 PICK THE RIGHT SITE. In the absence of a farm field, build raised beds in vacant lots or parking lots. Rooftops are also ideal urban sites, but Bishop warns, "You'll need to pick plants that love sun or put up a shade cloth because it gets hot up there."

2 GO VERTICAL. Green Street Academy grows tomatoes, lettuce and herbs in hanging baskets to maximize

every square foot of its urban garden.

3 THINK BIG. It might be tempting to stick with small crops like tomatoes and peppers, but with good soil and sunlight, even corn will grow in urban areas. "Not every plant is going to work in every environment, but don't be afraid to try," Bishop says.

4 SPREAD THE WORD. Urban agriculture is getting more popular, but Bishop believes it's important to share information about garden projects on social media. "The more food growing in cities, the better, and you could help inspire others to start urban gardens," he explains.

— By Jodi Helmer

An urban garden can also make for a great supervised agricultural experience (SAE). Find SAE inspiration at FFA.org/SAEVideos.

Questions On WATER QUALITY

Water is one of the most important natural resources upon which agriculture depends. Farmers use water and nutrients judiciously. Even so, some runoff happens. Environmental, government, university and business representatives are collaborating with farmers for results. Here, Diane Herndon, senior manager of sustainability at Nestlé Purina, discusses the company's efforts to partner toward shared goals on water conservation and quality.

Q: CAN YOU GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF HOW PURINA HAS BECOME INVOLVED IN IMPROVING WATER QUALITY?

A: Nestlé Purina is supporting work across the United States where our ingredients are grown. In Indiana, we work with The Nature Conservancy, farmers and others on the Wabash River to create wetlands and woodlands that can remove up to 40 percent of the soil and nitrogen before the water flows downstream.

Q: WHY DO YOU ENGAGE THIS WAY?

A: We source healthy ingredients for our pet food recipes from America's farms. The programs to which we contribute help to ensure that farmland stays fertile and the environment stays healthy so that we have abundant ingredients available well into the future.

Q: OUT WEST, A LACK OF WATER IS OFTEN THE ISSUE, CORRECT?

A: Nestlé Purina and Cargill are working with The Nature Conservancy and farmers in Nebraska to collect water data through sensors and download it to farmers' smartphones. From there, they can control their irrigation pivots through an app, saving time, water and money. The project is expected to save 2.4 billion gallons of water from the Ogallala Aquifer over the project's three-year course.

— By Des Keller

NATIONAL FFA OFFICER Q&A



FFA HAS EVOLVED IN RECENT YEARS TO INCLUDE A RECORD NUMBER OF MEMBERS, BROAD GEOGRAPHIC REACH, A FOCUS ON DIVERSITY AND MORE. WHAT NEW FRONTIER ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT FOR THE FUTURE OF FFA?



Luke O'Leary



NATIONAL FFA PRESIDENT

I am excited to give our students the platforms they need to solve the challenges of our world today. Through new partnerships involving science and technology,

our organization continues to push the boundary of providing relevant experiences for members to engage with agricultural issues and solutions. From our Stars in Agriscience to FFA Blue 365, it's clear our organization is forward-focused and putting members in the spotlight to be the world changers of today and tomorrow.



Layni LeBlanc



NATIONAL FFA SECRETARY

FFA prepares students to be leaders in many ways, but I think something that will be pressing for the next generation

is the ability to lead initiatives that will solve the world's critical issues. The FFA Blue 365 initiative is really encouraging to me because we are providing experiences that equip FFA members to handle issues such as food insecurity, health, environmental awareness, efficient agricultural practices and so many more.



Jordan Stowe



SOUTHERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

I am most excited about FFA reaching people in unique places. There are FFA chapters in 24 of the 25 largest cities in the United States. By providing more opportunities and growing into urban areas, our members are able to explore agricultural opportunities that interest them and develop new ideas to bring to our organization! Agriculture is an industry that is relevant to everyone's life, and the strides FFA is making to impact every individual are phenomenal. I am excited to see how far it will go.



Adrian Schunk



EASTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

I am beyond excited about the National FFA Inclusion and Diversity platform. I believe we can learn much more from our differences than we ever could from our similarities. When we truly live out our motto of "doing to learn," we embrace opportunities to learn from those who are different from us. After all, the future of our organization, our industry of agriculture and our world depends on it.



Ridge Hughbanks



CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT

Some of the greatest opportunities in FFA are the ones where students can interact with industry experts and have real-world, hands-on experiences. It will be fascinating to see how utilizing the Blue Room and more technology within our programs will impact FFA members' experiences.

I am most excited to see how students will apply technological advancements to better their SAEs, communities and agriculture.



Shea Booster



WESTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

FFA is constantly evolving to meet the needs of students from all backgrounds. Our organization is currently booming in urban areas with chapters in many of the country's largest cities. My roots run more urban than rural, and the idea of FFA reaching more students from metropolitan areas is exciting.

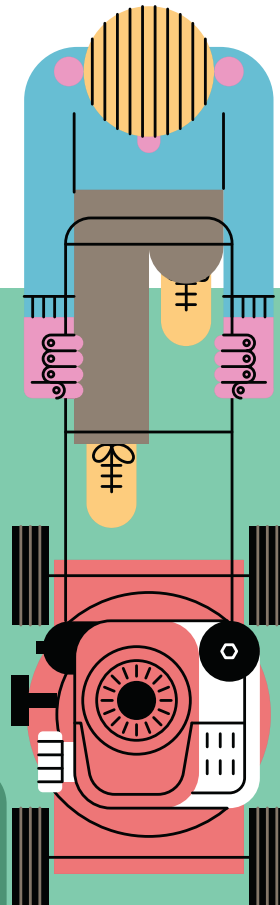
SIX MONEymaking ways to DIVERSIFY

Diversifying a business can add income, reduce risk, fill up downtime and bring new excitement to work. Think about these ideas that utilize resources you may already have.

By Gene Johnston • Illustrations by John Devolle

1 YARD MAINTENANCE

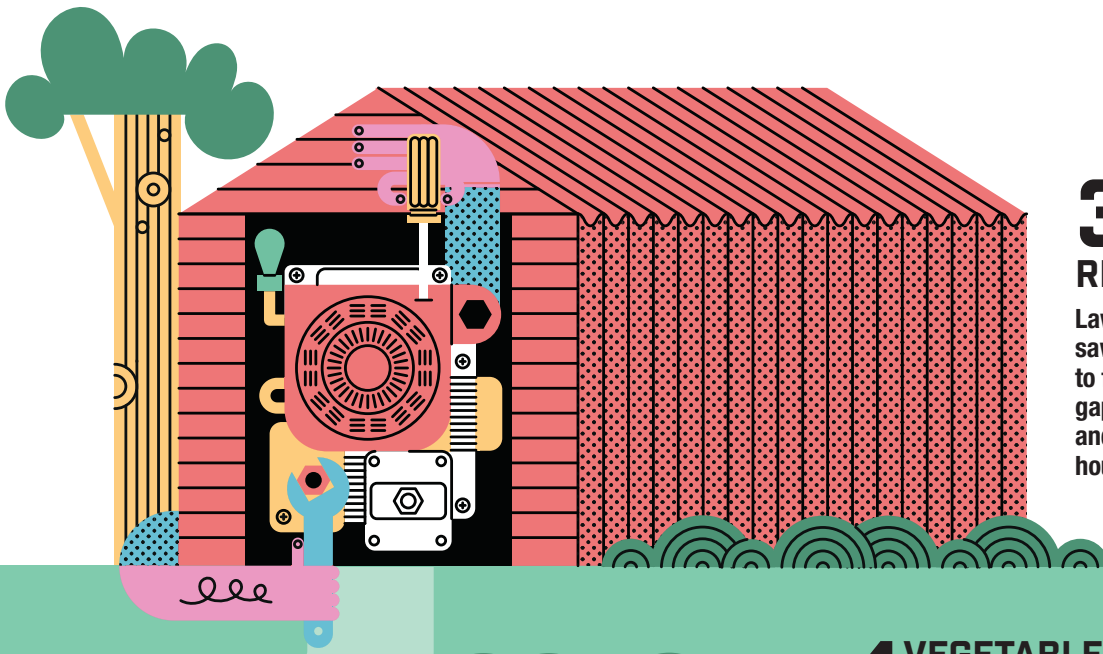
You've got the mowers, trimmers and tillers. Hire them – and yourself – out. Sell your services to people in need of lawn care, flowerbed cleanup, mulching, bushwhacking and more.



2 CAMPING ACCOMMODATIONS

More people are hitting the road for a family campout. Your back grove or farm pond is the uncluttered nature they seek. For \$20 per night, give them the full farm-tour experience.





3 SMALL ENGINE REPAIR

Lawn mower and chain saw mechanics are hard to find these days. Fill that gap with your shop, tools and know-how. Set a good hourly rate for your work.

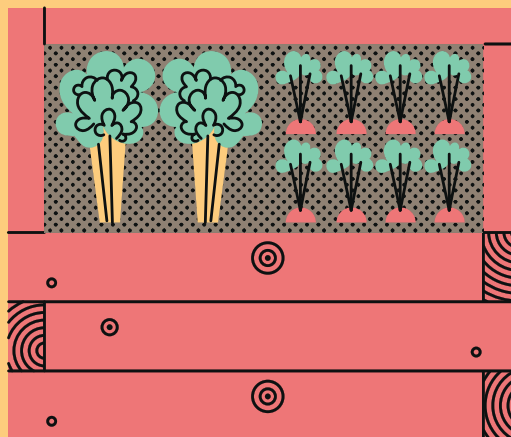
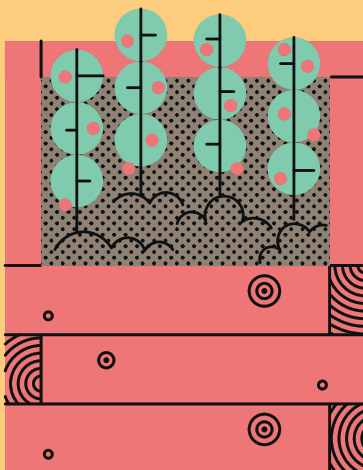
4 VEGETABLE GARDEN

The local-food demand has opened doors for small-scale vegetable growers. An Iowa company that contracts with farmers to grow carrots recommends starting on a half-acre to get a feel for it. Gross income potential: \$1,000 per half-acre.



5 NATURAL PORK

Niman Ranch, a California-based natural meats company, buys pigs raised the old-fashioned way – outside or in bedded pens with no crates. Consider providing sows to similar niche companies.



6 URBAN GARDEN

Backyard raised-bed gardens are a trend. Build and manage them. Sizes and configurations are limitless, and good ideas are available at state Extension offices.

GET READY TO GROW

Get to know the new team of passionate agriculturists ready to serve FFA — and you! Judging by their pasts, they have every intention of encouraging all FFA members to get out of their comfort zones.

They are six individuals, all from different parts of the country and from different backgrounds. One loves to raise dairy goats. Two overcame shyness to compete in an FFA Creed speaking leadership development event. Another sang in the national chorus. Two others joined FFA after being encouraged by a friend and a crush. They are six individuals with different likes and dis-

likes, unique career paths and goals, but all are connected by one mission: premier leadership, personal growth and career success.

Members of our national convention newsroom crew spent some time getting to know our new national FFA officers. Through it all, an interesting thread rang through: Don't get too comfortable.

Luke O'Leary

National FFA President

FFA CHAPTER: San Luis Obispo FFA, Calif.

COLLEGE: Texas A&M University

MAJOR: Agricultural leadership and development

Ironically, losing was a key ingredient in Luke O'Leary's success.

Running for FFA office in his home state of California his senior year of high school was a defining moment, but it was losing the election that taught him a valuable lesson: Learn from your experiences, no matter the outcome. The next year, O'Leary ran for office again and was elected president, but he says, "It was that first year I ran that really taught me the most about what I want to pursue and who I am, win or lose."

O'Leary decided to pursue national office because he wants to give back to agriculture, inspire others to be leaders and have a positive impact on people. "I believe my purpose is to develop deep relationships and to bring a light to the lives of those around me," he says.

He wants FFA members to look at every new opportunity with courage, no matter their age. "It's incredibly important to realize that we learn from every step we take outside of our normal comfort zones," he says. "That's not a place to step into and then jump right back out of to get back to the comfortable space that we love. We step into that place to learn from it and to grow our comfort zone and, in turn, to really grow our sphere of influence."

— By Martha Hoffman



Layni LeBlanc

National FFA Secretary

FFA CHAPTER: Walker FFA, La.

COLLEGE: Louisiana State University

MAJOR: Animal science – science and technology

For Layni LeBlanc, participating in FFA wasn't a given. The Louisiana native is not from an agricultural background but decided to join the organization because of her agriculture teacher.

"My advisor encouraged me to participate in Creed speaking in the ninth grade," LeBlanc says. "At the time, I was crazy-shy and just sat at my desk and didn't venture out. But by participating in that event, I figured out that I was capable of public speaking and being a leader."

LeBlanc credits FFA and her advisors with helping her come out of her shell and finding her sweet spot in the organization — veterinary science.

"The realization that this organization had poured so much into me over the years led me to want to serve FFA on the national level," LeBlanc says. "As a national officer, I want to give back to students who are just like I was, waiting for someone to tell them they are capable."

As she prepares for her year of service, the college freshman is looking forward to meeting students and advisors from across the country and building relationships with them.

— By Cheyenne Dunn





Adrian Schunk

Eastern Region Vice President

FFA CHAPTER: Mason FFA, Mich.
COLLEGE: Michigan State University
MAJOR: Communications

For Adrian Schunk, one sentence made all the difference. When she was a high school freshman, her FFA advisor encouraged, “Adrian, you should do Creed speaking,” even though Schunk had never spoken in front of a group of people. The experience “truly changed my life and changed the trajectory of my life and my passions,” she says. “Now I love connecting with people through public speaking, even though it wasn’t an easy thing to do at the beginning.”

The youngest of four siblings (three of them adopted from Russia), Schunk’s time in FFA has helped her grow but has also opened her eyes to how she can help others.

As a Michigan state officer, she encouraged FFA members to do the unimaginable, which helped her decide to pursue national office. “I couldn’t pass up the opportunity to keep encouraging other members. If there’s something that scares you or intimidates you, I think that’s the first thing you should try, because that’s when you step out of your comfort zone and that’s when you grow.”

– By Martha Hoffman

Jordan Stowe

Southern Region Vice President

FFA CHAPTER: Enterprise FFA, Ala.
COLLEGE: Auburn University
MAJOR: Agriscience education

Jordan Stowe took her first agricultural class when her best friend encouraged her to sign up. She first thought FFA wasn’t for her but then signed up for a Career Development Event (CDE) because her friend was doing it. “When I went to my first CDE, which was an extemporaneous speaking contest, I remember coming out of that contest room and thinking maybe I wouldn’t be the top score that day, but I had done something to get out of my comfort zone,” she says. “From there, I ran with FFA.”

That push landed her a spot as a chapter officer and then a state officer. She wanted to go further, so she ran for national office in 2017 and wasn’t elected. “I realized it wasn’t about the position; it’s about the growth you experience,” she says. “That growth was important, and I thought I should run for national office again.”

This year, the college junior is excited to travel across the country, and she’s looking forward to exploring international agriculture in Japan.

– By Lauren Schwab



Ridge Hughbanks

Central Region Vice President

FFA CHAPTER: Alva FFA, Okla.

COLLEGE: Oklahoma State University

MAJOR: Agribusiness

Growing up on an Oklahoma farm, Ridge Hughbanks was raised with a love for agriculture. But FFA brought him beyond his multigenerational family farm and his hometown when he participated in the Oklahoma FFA chorus at state convention one year. That's when FFA started to stick, Hughbanks says, and he went on to sing in the national convention chorus.

"That is what got me out of my comfort zone and helped me realize that there's a lot more to this organization than just my hometown and my home chapter," he says. "I got to meet more and more people and see just how incredible this organization is at changing the lives of students nationwide."

Along with being active in football at his high school, Hughbanks made opportunities for himself to have new experiences in FFA, like trying the public speaking CDE. "Do something that you don't think you have an interest in and see where it takes you," he says.

The small-town, life-loving college junior knows that FFA can take you as far as you're willing to invest in it. This year, Hughbanks is most excited to serve FFA members.

— By Dené Dryden



Shea Booster

Western Region Vice President

FFA CHAPTER: Bend FFA, Ore.

COLLEGE: Oregon State University

MAJOR: Agricultural business management

Shea Booster admits he first joined FFA to get the attention of a girl he was crushing on in eighth grade.

"I knew she was taking an ag ed class, so I joined," he says. "But I quickly realized that wasn't the reason I wanted to be a part of the organization."

Thankfully, his agricultural education teacher soon uncovered his passion for agriculture. "My senior year of high school, I spent five out of seven class periods in her classroom. She kept handing me more books and telling me to research more. Without her, I wouldn't be here," he says.

This college sophomore was inspired to run for national office by his little sister. "She has these huge dreams. I knew if I wanted to be the older brother she looked up to, I had to have some of my own," he says. When he was unsuccessful running for national office his first time, he remembers his sister hugging him and reassuring him he would get it next year. "That moment lit a fire in me. I knew I had more to give to members who would look up to me like my little sister does."

— By Lauren Schwab



The Center FFA Chapter placed a service dog with veteran Sergio Cuevas (shown bottom right).



PREMIER *leadership*

Service for SERVICE

MEMBERS FROM NORTH DAKOTA HELP
CONNECT A DECORATED VETERAN
WITH A FURRY COMPANION.

Through the Patriotic Puppy Project, the Center FFA Chapter came together and rallied its small North Dakota community to help change a veteran's life.

The project began when Nikki Fideldy-Doll, the Center FFA Chapter advisor and agriculture teacher at Center-Stanton Public School in Center, N.D., saw a Facebook post from Mindy Weist, who owns Distinguished Danes – a Great Dane breeding operation – with her husband. In the post, Weist indicated she would like to donate one of her Great Dane puppies to a veteran in need. Fideldy-Doll immediately thought of her FFA chapter and how the members could get involved.

“Mindy had visited my animal science class in the past, so we already had a relationship,” Fideldy-Doll

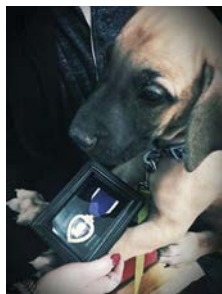
says. “I reached out and asked if we could help her once she found a veteran, and she was happy to have us on board. At the time, we had no idea how successful and impactful this project would be.”

A PERFECT FIT

In early 2018, Weist found a veteran, Sergio Cuevas, a New Mexico resident and Purple Heart recipient who served in the U.S. Army for nine years before being medically discharged due to a multiple sclerosis diagnosis.

“Great Danes are wonderful service dogs due to their large size and temperament, and I knew Sergio would be a great owner,” Weist says. “He was a perfect fit for this project.”

Weist connected Fideldy-Doll and Cuevas, and the Center FFA quickly got to work raising funds to create a puppy care package for Cuevas. Over the course of



“**GREAT DANES ARE WONDERFUL SERVICE DOGS DUE TO THEIR LARGE SIZE AND TEMPERAMENT, AND I KNEW SERGIO WOULD BE A GREAT OWNER. HE WAS A PERFECT FIT FOR THIS PROJECT.**”

– MINDY WEIST

two months, FFA members raised \$180 in cash donations and received a variety of supplies from classmates, teachers and the community – dog treats, food and toys, for example – which was far more than they were expecting.

“We live in a very small town, and our school only has about 100 students,” Fideldy-Doll says. “But our FFA members worked hard, and I think the Patriotic Puppy Project showed them that a small group of people in a little town can actually make a huge impact on someone else's life.”

When Cuevas came to North Dakota to pick up his puppy, he also visited Center-Stanton Public School and met the Center FFA members, who Fideldy-Doll says were excited to give him their care package in person. He was excited to meet them, too, and continues to be humbled by their generosity.

– By Jessica Walker Boehm

50

YEARS OF
WOMEN IN FFACAREER *Success*a
NATURAL
FIT

As an education ranger, this FFA alumna spends time interacting with park visitors, delivering school programs and teaching others about natural resource systems.

Extemporaneous public speaking can be one of the most challenging leadership development events to participate in. Competitors need a breadth of knowledge on countless topics. They also need the ability to craft a speech quickly and then deliver a talk they haven't practiced in front of an audience. For Katie Anton, an education ranger at Acadia National Park in Maine, these moments prepared her for her future more than any other as a member of the Lyman

Hall FFA Chapter in Connecticut.

"As a park ranger, you might be surprised to learn that I get up in front of a group of people and speak multiple times a day," Anton says. "Learning the tips and tricks for doing this confidently while I was an FFA member really helped form my career."

While Anton no longer wears her blue corduroy jacket in front of a crowd, she does pull on a green windbreaker, lace up her boots and educate thousands of park visitors every year on forest diversity, marine biology, nocturnal animal adaptations and more. For some FFA members, this image may reflect their agricultural education advisors. In fact, Anton initially chose to study education in college. It was there she discovered she preferred nontraditional classrooms and looked at alternative options. One spring, she became an education intern for the National Park Service, and the "Doing to Learn" line of the FFA motto became a way of life.

"I have always believed that you have to get your hands dirty in order to fully understand a topic," Anton says. "I teach the younger park visitors by using hands-on fieldwork. We look into tide pools to do population studies. I run a marine touch tank where the visitors learn about the animals, as well as the chemistry, biology and mechanics that go into these ecosystems."

WORK AND PLAY

It's not just the subject matter that motivates Anton.

"I get to inspire young people to develop a passion for learning and to have fun while doing it," she says. "Not everyone is able to understand science in a classroom or a laboratory, but science is something that happens in the world around us every day."

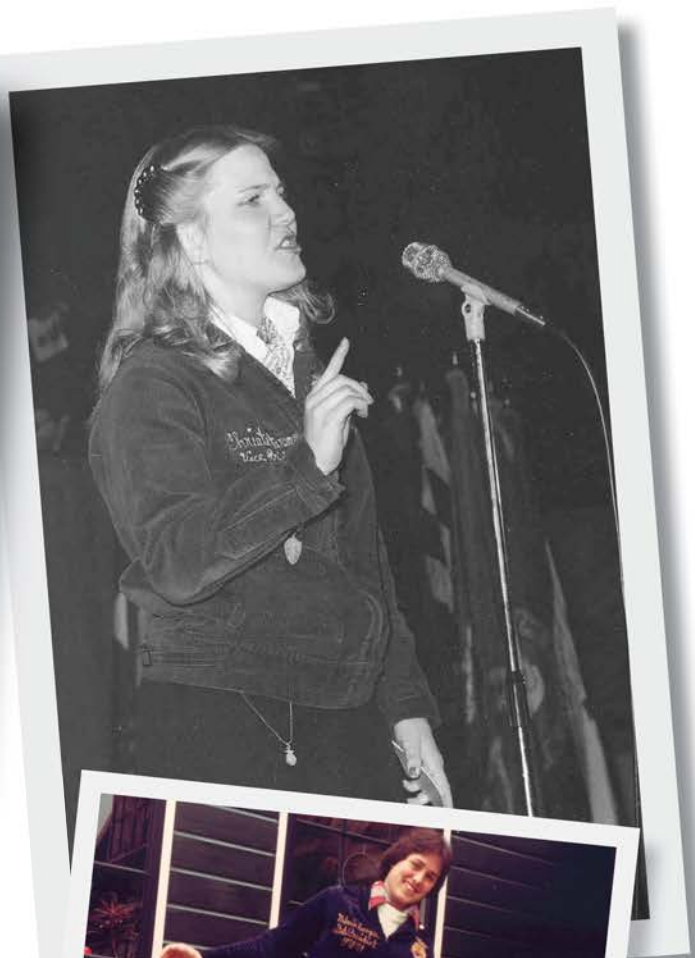
Anton's passion for her work shines through, and she credits the National FFA Organization for putting her on the path to where she is today. FFA also offers resources to all members to learn more about careers in natural resource systems through AgExplorer.com. Here, members can learn more about rural and urban careers that develop and maintain natural environments, protect wildlife and manage ecosystems.

— By Bev Flatt

“I GET TO INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE TO DEVELOP A PASSION FOR LEARNING AND TO HAVE FUN WHILE DOING IT.”

— KATIE ANTON





Snapshots in Time

Clockwise from top right: Christe Peterson competes in a public speaking contest in 1979. Melanie Burgess became a national FFA vice president in 1981. Evadale, Texas, member Chrystal McDaniel poses with the 3 millionth FFA jacket. Sharon Staley of the White River FFA Chapter in Washington, models the first official girl's FFA jacket. American Farmer Degrees are first awarded to women in 1973.

THE FIGHT FOR FEMALE MEMBERSHIP

It's been 50 years since the 1969 National FFA Convention when women gained full membership. Let's celebrate the decades of courage, diligence and relentlessness that paved the way.

BY BEV FLATT

In 1942, D. Gilson was a successful member of the Port Royal FFA Chapter in Pennsylvania by every definition. Gilson was an engaged agricultural education student, led successful projects on the family farm, and received the chapter's coveted Carpentry Award as a senior.

When the United States entered World War II, Gilson temporarily left college and worked as a welder, using the skills developed growing up on a farm and in agricultural mechanics classes in high school. After the war, Gilson completed college and went on to become a teacher and farmer. Unfortunately, you won't find the successes and stories of Dorothy Gilson-Baker (D. Gilson), or thousands of other women like her, among any national archives. It wasn't until 1969 that women were officially allowed membership into the National FFA Organization. However, in the 50 years since the formal acceptance of female membership, women have become an integral part of the organization. Women have achieved significant milestones, and they continue to shape the future of agricultural education and the industry of agriculture.

The push for female membership wasn't an effort led during a single business session of a single National FFA Convention. Rather, it was a feat that required incredible energy and efforts that began

more than 30 years earlier. In the morning session of convention on Oct. 23, 1935, a Massachusetts delegate, Alfred Vaughan, was the first official member to broach the subject that women be allowed full membership at the national level. However, the question of female membership during this convention was resolved as follows:

"That when officially found that any State Association in a Future Farmers of America has girl members on its rolls, such State Associations shall be denied participation in all national Future Farmer of America contests and national F.F.A. awards. And no funds from the national treasury shall be available to such State Associations for the purpose of transporting delegates to the national conventions until such time as the names of the girl members are removed from the official rolls of the State Association and local chapters in accordance with the constitution."

—Eighth National Convention Proceedings Report

For the next 30 years, state and local chapters integrated female membership at varying levels. Some females enrolled in agricultural education classes but were not allowed to become FFA members. Some women were added to rosters using initials that didn't reveal their gender, like Dorothy Gilson-Baker.



Women members participate in a horticulture demonstration in 1980.

And other females were identified as “social ambassadors” for the chapter and received the coveted Sweetheart jacket.

IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED ...

The issue received little attention until the 1964 National FFA Convention. During the 37th convention, Paul Miller from Connecticut proposed an amendment to open national membership to women. Despite Miller moving

was formed to review various impacts of membership. The following August, the National FFA Board of Directors proposed constitutional changes based on this committee’s work, including the recommendation to remove the word *male* from the constitution. During the morning and afternoon business sessions on Oct. 13, 1966, delegates took part in intense debate and discussion on multiple sections of the ad hoc report. By the end of the convention, the

to accept the amendment and a second by Irving Torres of Puerto Rico, the motion was defeated once again. Despite the amendment’s initial defeat, the delegates succeeded in bringing the topic back into the spotlight.

In January of 1966, an Ad Hoc FFA Organization Study Committee

delegates accepted all recommendations of the committee except for two, one of which was to drop the word *male* from the constitution.

CHANGING TIMES, BUT NO CHANGES

During this time, the Vietnam War continued to rage overseas, Apollo 4 launched into space and Twiggy made her fashion debut. The climate and culture toward women’s rights throughout America continued to shift, as well, and in 1967, the Affirmative Action Policy was expanded to cover discrimination based on gender.

As political and legal environments adapted and changed, the National FFA Organization sought legal counsel for the obligation to accept females as members on the national level. Despite receiving legal interpretation that declared excluding females from membership was discriminatory, amendments could not be made to the constitution that year. Instead, the delegates of the 40th National FFA Convention were informed of the legal ruling concerning female members, instructed to take the

The Female FFA Pioneers

It was 1969 that marked the first official year for female membership into the National FFA Organization. However, the following 50 years truly revealed just how much of an impact women could have in the organization. While names like Alfred Vaughan, Paul Miller and Donald Shinn are remembered for their contribution toward achieving female membership, there are countless other names today that inspire women who wear the blue jacket. Some of those names include:



Anita Decker and Patricia Krowicki

Just one year after female membership was secured, Anita Decker from New York and Patricia Krowicki from New Jersey served as the first female delegates at the 43rd National FFA Convention.



Julie Smiley

In 1976, Julie Smiley from Washington became the first woman to serve at the national level as the western region vice president. Since then, more than 80 women have been elected to the National FFA Officer Team.



Karlene Lindow

Karlene Lindow shattered another glass ceiling for women in FFA in 2002 when she was named the American Star Farmer. She raised hogs in Chili, Wis., and her jacket now hangs in the Smithsonian National Museum of American History.



Jan Eberly

In 1982, Jan Eberly from California was elected to serve as the first female national FFA president.

information back to the local level, explore the situation and return to Kansas City in one year with the views of the members in order to provide appropriate discussion.

At that time, approximately 3,300 females were enrolled in vocational agricultural classes nationwide and an increasing number of states accepted women as members. By many accounts, acceptance of female members was inevitable during the following convention.

On Oct. 17, 1968, Donald Shinn from New Jersey declared on the business floor, “Any student who is regularly enrolled in vocational agriculture is entitled to become an active member of any chartered FFA chapter.” The motion was quickly seconded by Richard Posthumus from Michigan, yet only a smattering of applause followed. The motion was defeated.

Yet, the spirit of the motion was not to be ignored. Howard Schrinar from Wyoming immediately stood before the delegate body and moved that each state appoint a committee to explore membership for women. Massachusetts once again made its stance known with a second from Donald Bridges. But again, the motion was defeated.

BREAKING GROUND IN 1969

Finally, one year later, on Oct. 15, 1969, Paul Bankhead of California moved and Robert Craig of Michigan seconded once more to strike the word *male* from the constitution. The motion carried.

On the morning of Oct. 17, Johnny Holland from Tennessee stood before the delegation and read the following resolution:

“WHEREAS, we, the delegates, to the Forty-Second annual convention have voted to allow all students of vocational agriculture to become members of the FFA;

“WHEREAS, we therefore have expressed our belief that all individuals are created equal and should have equal opportunities;

“WHEREAS, we also feel that only those who have competed on an equal basis and earned national recognition should be highly honored at our national convention; be it therefore

“RESOLVED, that we, the delegates, gathered here today, feel that the introduc-

tion of the first active female members to participate in the national FFA activities and the atmosphere and publicity thus associated with these events, be recognized as over-dramatized presentations and should not be taken as precedence set for following female participation, that instead FFA members, girls and boys, should be treated and honored equally.”

John Comegys from Delaware seconded the adoption of the resolution. The motion carried by a two-vote margin.

More than 12,000 days had passed since the initial idea was brought before the organization to the final acceptance of female FFA members.

THE AFTERMATH

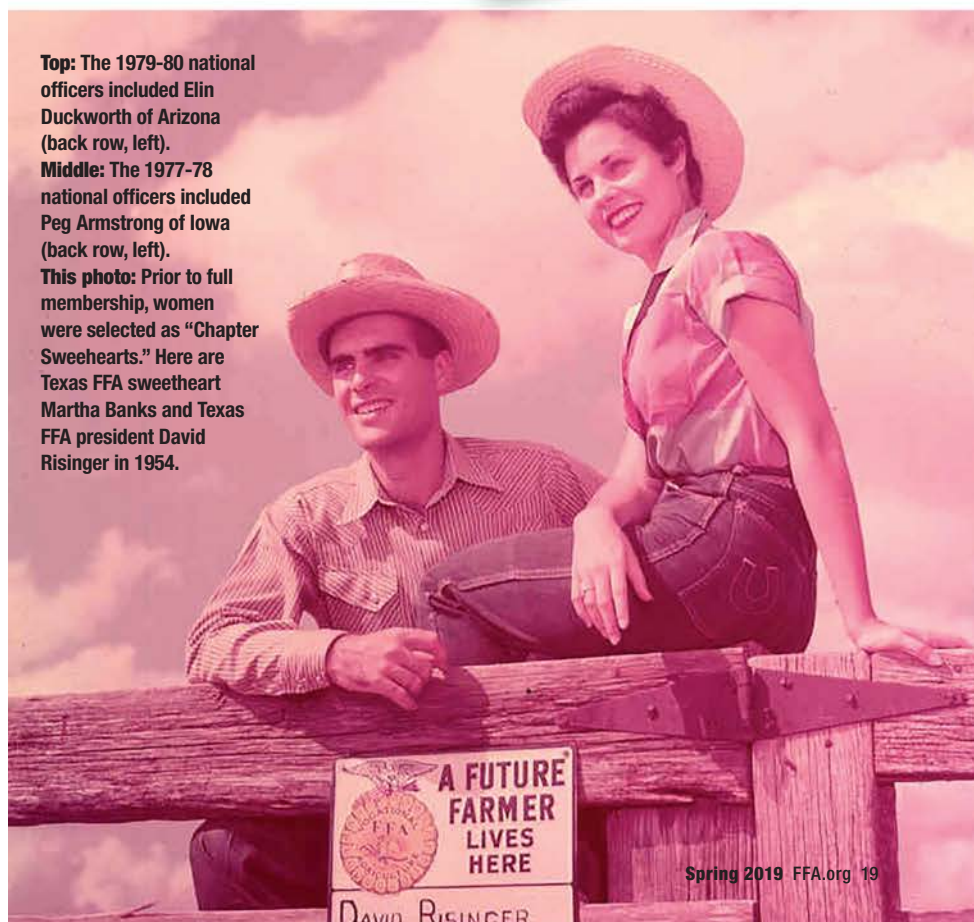
Since 1969, women have served as convention delegates, national officers and even been named as the American Star Farmer. Nearly half of all FFA members are women, and females hold approximately 50 percent of state leadership positions. In fact, if you peek into the archives once more, you might find a familiar name. Dorothy Gilson-Baker’s legacy continues through her granddaughter Libby Baker-Mikesell, the 2016-17 Pennsylvania state president. •



Top: The 1979-80 national officers included Elin Duckworth of Arizona (back row, left).

Middle: The 1977-78 national officers included Peg Armstrong of Iowa (back row, left).

This photo: Prior to full membership, women were selected as “Chapter Sweethearts.” Here are Texas FFA sweetheart Martha Banks and Texas FFA president David Risinger in 1954.



50
YEARS OF
WOMEN IN FFA

Groundbreakers

**MEET SOME OF THE WOMEN WHO
HELPED SHAPE THE FUTURE OF FFA.**

**THIS YEAR MARKS THE 50TH
ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN IN FFA.
FROM THE MOMENT WOMEN WERE
FIRST WELCOMED INTO THE NATIONAL
FFA ORGANIZATION IN 1969, THEIR
ENTHUSIASTIC MEMBERSHIP HAS BEEN
INSTRUMENTAL IN SHAPING THE FUTURE
OF FFA – BUT IT ALL STARTED WITH A
FEW GROUNDBREAKING LEADERS.
MEET FIVE WOMEN WHO PAVED THE
WAY FOR WOMEN IN FFA.**

Story by Jodi Helmer / Illustrations by Matt Cook

ANITA DECKER WRIGHT



Growing up on a farm in upstate New York, Anita Decker Wright raised livestock, helped in the fields and learned how to repair farm equipment.

Wright joined local and state FFA chapters in high school but, at the time, women weren't allowed to join the National FFA Organization. She attended the National FFA Convention in 1969 when delegates voted to allow females into the national organization. The following year, Wright, a newly elected state officer, returned to the convention, where she was one of two female delegates in attendance.

"I didn't realize what a big deal it was [to be one of the first two female delegates to attend the national convention] because girls had been involved at the local and district levels," Wright recalls.

Attending the national convention was exciting, but Wright made sure to follow all the rules so females would continue to be welcomed and respected within the organization. As an FFA member, she competed in livestock judging competitions, attended additional conventions and traveled to Europe to learn about the global importance of agriculture.

Looking back, Wright believes involvement with FFA helped her develop leadership, communication and teamwork skills that were instrumental in several of her achievements, including earning scholarships and serving as student government president during college.

"FFA opened a lot of doors for me," she says.

Cathie Malison

Although Cathie Macallister Malison was active in the FFA chapter at Northern Burlington County Regional High School in Columbus, N.J., she was never elected president. "Back then, the boys wouldn't vote for a girl," she recalls.

However, in 1971, while enrolled in Cook College at Rutgers University, she was elected president of the New Jersey FFA

Association; Malison was the first woman to hold the title. One year later, she became the first woman to run for national office and, when she earned her American FFA Degree in 1973, she was among the first woman to earn that honor, too.

"I knew I was breaking barriers but, to me, it wasn't such a big issue," she recalls. "I was someone with an interest who could get the job done and,

like every other FFA youth, I wanted to become a leader."

Malison wasn't just a leader in FFA. She was also a leader in her career. She taught agricultural education, advised farmers as a county Extension agent and operated a garden center. When Malison moved to Idaho with her husband, John, in 1998, she used the leadership skills she developed in FFA to make connections,



volunteering for fundraisers and serving on the board of a local sporting association.

"So many things have changed in the

last 50 years, and it's nice to see how many women are involved and how many are national officers," she says.



BREANNA HOLBERT

As a high school freshman at Tokay High School in Lodi, Calif., Breanna Holbert admits to signing up for agricultural education to help boost her GPA. The self-described “ethnic girl from an urban area” never imagined that the class would change her life.

“FFA kept me anchored,” she recalls. “I worked just as hard as the next person, and I felt like I belonged. It set my heart in motion to pursue leadership.”

Holbert served as chapter officer, section officer and chapter president. In 2017, she became the first African-American woman to serve as the president of the National FFA Organization.

Though Holbert didn’t consider herself “presidential” when she was elected and worried that her skin color was more of a focus than her accomplishments, traveling across the United States to give speeches and meet other FFA members helped her realize the importance of representation.

Holbert recalls speaking to a classroom filled with African-American students at the Arabia Mountain FFA Chapter in Georgia. “One girl sat in the front row, crying. After the class, she came up to me and said, ‘You give so much hope to girls like me.’ It made me realize that other African-American girls are going to follow in my footsteps, and I feel so proud of that,” she says.

Illinois’ First All-Female State Officer Team

As the executive director of the Illinois FFA Association, Mindy Bunselmeyer has the privilege of working with outstanding young leaders across the Prairie State. This year, the association made state history when the first all-female state FFA Officer Team for Illinois was elected.

Thirteen of the 20 candidates who ran were women. During the state delegate convention, Sophia Hortin, Eliza Petry, Shaylee Clinton, Miriam Hoffman and Taylor Hartke were elected to the state officer team by popular vote.

The historic event attracted a lot of attention and actually made the newly elected officers worry that their gender overshadowed their accomplishments.

“The young women who were elected are all so amazing,” Bunselmeyer says. “It should be known that they were elected based on their leadership abilities, merit and talent – not their gender.”

Although Bunselmeyer knows she’s part of a historic moment in FFA history, she notes, “FFA isn’t about young men or young women; it’s an organization for young leaders.”

BELINDA CHASON

In 2018, Belinda Chason was inducted into the Florida FFA Foundation Hall of Fame to honor a career as an agriculture advocate spanning more than four decades.

In addition to working as a state FFA advisor, Chason also logged several impressive accomplishments within the organization. She was the first female state FFA advisor, the first female executive director of the Florida FFA Association and the first woman elected to the National FFA Organization Board of Directors.

Although she's proud of all of these roles, Chason believes her role on the National FFA Organization Board of Directors was among the most impactful, explaining, "It was important to the overall operation of the organization to break the barrier and elect a woman to serve in that position."

Chason joined the National FFA Organization Board of Directors in 1996 and was involved in the historic decisions to move both the National FFA Center to Indianapolis and the National FFA Convention & Expo to Louisville. It was

an exciting time to be on the board, she says, and provided opportunities to bring a unique perspective to landmark rulings.

"FFA taught me to look at the big picture, and I hope that was one of the things I brought to the table," she recalls.

Although Chason retired in 2011, she remains active in FFA. "It was such a good learning experience for me, and I want to be sure other females have those opportunities," she says.



Karlene Lindow Krueger

Karlene Lindow Krueger was thrilled to compete for the American Star Farmer award, but she wasn't optimistic about her chances of winning.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I expect to make it to the top four and, when I did, never in my wildest dreams did I expect to win," Krueger recalls.

It wasn't a lack of confidence that made the third-generation farmer and FFA member think the odds were against her. It was her operation's size, the smallest of all of the competitors. Krueger was raising 100 sows, five feeder calves and three beef cattle, while her competitors were managing up to 5,000 acres.

In 2002, Krueger was humbled to be the first woman to receive the American Star Farmer award, calling it, "The last hurdle women had to overcome [in FFA]."

Although Krueger is proud of the prestigious title, awards aside, she believes her participation in FFA helped shape her life. "Being in FFA has a ripple effect," she says.

A former member of the FFA livestock judging team, Krueger is the livestock judging coach in Campbellsport, Wisc. She continues to farm, and she shares her passion for agriculture with her children. Krueger's oldest daughter just entered her first year of FFA.

"It was such an honor to be the first female American Star Farmer," she says. "I hope it gives young women like my daughters something to strive for." •



FFA *in the* USA

PLANT A GARDEN TO FEED THE COMMUNITY. ORDER BANQUET SUPPLIES. PREP FOR STATE CONVENTION. WITH TASKS LIKE THESE AND MORE ON A CHAPTER'S TO-DO LIST, SPRING IS A BUSY SEASON. HERE ARE SOME OF THE IMPORTANT AND EXCITING FFA HAPPENINGS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY. — Compiled by Julie Woodard

ALABAMA

Giddy up! The Pell City FFA uses the spring months to plan its two-day Bulls on the Lake Rodeo, which takes place on the shores of Lake Logan Martin in July.

ALASKA

This April, during a day of service at their state FFA convention, members will work side by side with other organizations to spread the word about suicide awareness.

ARIZONA

The state association will host its annual Spring Conference, where FFA members compete in career and leadership development events, attend workshops and learn how to become more involved in FFA.

ARKANSAS

In February, members from across the state will gather at the University of Arkansas to compete in the World Food Prize program. Students will write a paper about a food crisis in the world and present their research.

CALIFORNIA

Dreams do come true! Members attending the 91st California State FFA Leadership Conference in Anaheim this April will also get passes to visit Disneyland for an evening.

COLORADO

During the Bennet FFA Chapter's Farm Day, members show off their livestock SAEs to elementary students and help them plant plastic cup gardens to take home.



CONNECTICUT

To build up excitement for their state FFA convention, last year's state officers started the Road to Convention Tour, when they travel to as many chapters in the state as they can in a week.

DELAWARE

Sussex Central FFA will host its annual Thank a Farmer Dinner this spring to showcase the hard work of local farmers.

FLORIDA

Along with Easter Seals of Southwest Florida, Palmetto FFA will travel to Sarasota to spend the day with special needs students for its Kids Day Out program. Members help students dye Easter eggs and teach them about livestock.

GEORGIA

Newton College and Career Academy FFA hires out its herd of five goats, called the Chew Crew, to community members who want to chomp out vegetation in unwanted areas.

IDAHO

Got milk? Chapters will partner with Dairy West to hand out milk at several state sport tournaments throughout the spring.

ILLINOIS

Mount Vernon FFA hosts an annual Safety Day Camp, where young students visit a local farm to learn agricultural safety tips on everything from PTO shafts to animal care.

INDIANA

In March, members representing 12 state districts compete in LDEs and gain skills in various contests, from agricultural sales presentation and job interview to Quiz Bowl and scrapbook.

IOWA

The Lone Tree FFA Chapter and community hold a Hunger Service Day. Students gather to package up to 30,000 meals to build a service-oriented culture within the district.

KANSAS

This spring, the Kansas FFA Association will partner with alumni and supporters and agriculture educators to grade and offer feedback to every Kansas FFA member who submits a proficiency award application.

KENTUCKY

Each March, regional FFA Day contests take place in the state's 12 regions. Members participate in parliamentary procedure;

public, extemporaneous, Creed and impromptu speaking; record-keeping; and other events.

LOUISIANA

Pearl River FFA is partnering with Kohl's to build and plant raised garden beds at the homes of low-income families in the community to promote the farm-to-table movement.

MAINE

FFA members will volunteer at Orono Community Garden during the Maine FFA State Convention to grow fresh produce for the elderly in the community.

MARYLAND

New digs! Maryland is moving its state FFA convention to the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, where the state will partner with various community supporters to give more service and recreation opportunities to members.

MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts will celebrate the addition of a new chapter at its state FFA convention in March, bringing the total number of chapters to 17.

MICHIGAN

Maple syrup is a huge income source for FFA members in the state. In early spring, chapters will head to the woods to begin tapping trees and learning how to process sap to create delicious maple syrup.



MINNESOTA

During a Day at the Capitol, members will get a feel for the legislative process through committee hearings, congressional visits and a tour of the department of agriculture.



MISSISSIPPI

Clarkdale FFA has united with the state's department of human services for the No Child Sleeps on the Floor project to build beds for less-fortunate families.

MISSOURI

To empower members, the state hosts Public Speaking Institutes where members work with specialists, including past national FFA officers, to learn the fundamentals of speeches and speaking contests.

MONTANA

Missoula FFA is finishing work on a USDA-inspected meat-processing facility at the chapter's ag center. All products will be produced, processed, packaged and sold by FFA members.

NEBRASKA

The state just wrapped up its Pathways to Careers Conference. More than 450 members engaged with more than 40 industry professionals to learn about agricultural careers and career-readiness skills.

NEVADA

During National Reading Week in March, Moapa Valley FFA will read agriculture-related picture books to elementary students.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

From April 11-13, more than 300 members will travel to the beautiful Mount Washington Hotel in the White Mountains for their state FFA convention.

NEW JERSEY

As part of its agricultural engineering class, Penns Grove FFA builds energy windmills from items around the classroom.

NEW MEXICO

New Mexico FFA members are defining what makes them "ag strong." Participate and stay up-to-date with the campaign using #AgStrong.

NORTH DAKOTA

Rolla FFA and local third-graders annually volunteer at the International Peace Gardens, a monument located on the border of the U.S. and Canada.

OHIO

To help members and the community understand the important role bees play in agriculture, Federal Hocking FFA maintains several hives through the spring season.

OREGON

Oregon FFA partners with the biology organization Envirothon for its environmental and natural resources CDE. FFA members have the opportunity to compete nationally twice while learning about other student organizations.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania FFA holds four regional state FFA officer candidacy school evenings where members across the state learn what being a state officer is like.

RHODE ISLAND

In March, Rhode Island FFA hosts the state's floriculture competition at Carbones, a local floral distributor.



Members make beautiful arrangements and showcase their floral knowledge.

SOUTH CAROLINA

During a three-day camp each spring, members learn about forestry through workshops and other camp activities.

TENNESSEE

Ten chapters in West Tennessee attend the Mid-South Farm and Gin Show in March. The chapters pack 50,000 meals for the Mid-South Food Bank during the event.

TEXAS

Hundreds of members will "learn to do" at the annual Day at the Capitol in Austin and see where Texas history has been made since 1889.

UTAH

In April, FFA members partner with local farmers and the Farm Bureau to host a Farm Field Day where they teach nearly 3,700 second-graders about agriculture.

VERMONT

During National FFA Week, the state officers read agricultural storybooks to children in elementary schools and day cares throughout the state.

VIRGINIA

Each spring, FFA members develop unique ways to

fundraise for their chapters. Many horticulture students create beautiful corsages and bouquets to sell for prom and graduation.

WASHINGTON

The Davenport FFA Chapter has an annual Cupcake Wars, where members compete to see who can make the best cupcakes using an unusual secret ingredient inspired by the state's agriculture.



WISCONSIN

In March, the Cooperative Network partners with Wisconsin FFA to host a Co-ops Yes! Conference, which teaches about the co-operative model of business.

7,000

OKLAHOMA

From March 13-22, FFA members from around the state will participate in the Oklahoma Youth Expo, the world's largest junior livestock show that features more than 7,000 exhibitors annually.

On the RECORD



Barbara JENKINS

The vice president of education and student programs for the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association and executive director of the USPOULTRY Foundation discusses her work to connect students to the food industry and her Honorary American FFA Degree.

Q: WERE YOU INVOLVED IN FFA GROWING UP?

A: No. In North Little Rock, Ark., I was involved in FBLA – Future Business Leaders of America. While that organization was not ag-related, it did guide us in public speaking and leadership development, so it had some commonality with FFA.

Q: HOW DID YOU COME TO WORK FOR USPOULTRY?

A: With a business administration degree, when I heard about the job at USPOULTRY, my first thought was that it wasn't a good fit for me, having no agricultural background. Then I said, "Wait a minute, why not give it a try?" And here it is more than 18 years later. So it was obviously a great decision for me. It's a great industry to serve and a great organization to be part of.

Q: WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL?

A: I engage with students at every level to show them the career opportunities within the poultry and egg industry. We take great pride in sponsoring youth outreach efforts such as the National FFA Convention & Expo, the poultry evaluation and food science and technology CDEs, and the poultry production proficiency event. Part of that sponsorship includes inviting the top 10 teams to the International Production & Processing Expo in Atlanta, which gives them good exposure to our industry and industry leaders.

I try to show youngsters that if they are interested in business, communications, information technology, engineering or other non-ag-related fields, there's a job for them in the poultry industry.

Q: AFTER WORKING WITH FFA FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, WHAT DO YOU ADMIRE MOST ABOUT IT?

A: I like the way it fosters leadership skills in students. I get to see it at the National FFA Convention & Expo every year.

I also see it on a local level. The Arabia Mountain High School FFA in Lithonia, Ga., is near our offices, and we've helped in their field days and have provided speakers to their events. I get to see leadership development there, as well.

Q: WHAT'S YOUR HIGHLIGHT OF FFA INVOLVEMENT?

A: Two years ago, FFA gave me an Honorary American FFA Degree during national convention. Again, I don't have an FFA background, so for the organization to recognize the leadership that I bring to the table was a tremendous honor.

Q: WHAT'S YOUR BEST ADVICE TO FFA MEMBERS?

A: Always network. Learn while leading; lead while learning. And never be afraid to step out of your comfort zone. Good things can happen. That's how I got to where I am today.

— By Gene Johnston

“ALWAYS NETWORK. LEARN WHILE LEADING; LEAD WHILE LEARNING. AND NEVER BE AFRAID TO STEP OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE.”

— BARBARA JENKINS



Ag Angle

LINDSAY MILLER

LOCATION: Kersey, Colo.

FFA CHAPTER: Platte Valley FFA

INSTAGRAM: @missmillers_photography

WEBSITE: MissMillersPhotography.com

Pictured here are my brother, Derek (in the John Deere 4455), and my dad, Scott, during spring fieldwork. This ground will be planted with silage corn for the cattle at our feedlot. This particular farm ground is owned by my great-grandfather, Rhinie Miller. Our family farming operation is owned by my grandpa, Richard Miller, who employs my dad and brother. This makes for three generations of Platte Valley FFA Alumni. I, too, completed my Greenhand year at the Platte Valley FFA Chapter before transferring high schools.

✱ **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.



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