



NEW

Summer 2020

HORIZONS

FFA.ORG

FFA

Is One Big

Ohana

For Members in Hawaii,
Ag Ed Is Like a **Family**

**Trade School
or College**

Which Is Best
for You?

**Soil
Horizons**

What's Up With
the Soil Below?



ONE BIG OHANA

The Waipahu Intermediate FFA Chapter is regarded as a model FFA program in Hawaii. It is one of only two middle school FFA chapters in the state and the only middle school chapter on Oahu. While it's on a smaller scale, the 150 members of this urban chapter learn big lessons about agriculture and food. They maximize lawn space on the school grounds, build their own raised garden beds and grow their own vegetables as part of their supervised agricultural experiences (SAEs).

Ag education there captures students' attention and wins them over for FFA. "FFA is like one big ohana [family], and it's amazing that you can share your passions in agriculture with people across the country," says member Kayla Nguyen.

I recently visited the Waipahu Intermediate FFA Chapter and its counterpart, Waipahu High School FFA, situated about 30 minutes west of Honolulu, to learn more. It was a fascinating lesson in Hawaiian agriculture and FFA history, and a firsthand look at an agricultural education ecosystem that succeeds. You can learn more in "One Big Ohana" on page 10.

I want to also acknowledge that as I write this letter, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected much of the world. Schools and businesses have gone remote, and we practice social distancing to stop the spread of the virus. It's an unnerving time, but FFA members have still found ways to step up. We'll share some of those stories in the future.

Finally, we have some changes coming to *FFA New Horizons*. Starting with the fall 2020 issue, you'll start receiving the magazine twice a year – at the beginning of the school year and at the beginning of the New Year – with more great content per issue. You'll see even more great content on FFA.org, so be sure to check it out regularly.

Enjoy and have a super summer!

Justin Davey

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



P.S. Did you know the oldest agricultural education program in the western U.S. is located on the island of Maui? It's true. Lahainaluna FFA can date its agriculture classes back to the 1830s, almost a century before FFA!

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THE FFA VISION

FFA is growing 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.

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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.

\$TIPS TO MARKET YOUR CROPS

AG LENDERS SAY THAT A KEY TRAIT OF SUCCESSFUL FARMERS IS PROACTIVE MARKETING. CHRIS GESWEIN, GENERAL MANAGER OF RIVER ELEVATORS FOR ADM, A GLOBAL FOOD PROCESSING AND COMMODITIES TRADING COMPANY, OFFERS THESE TIPS FOR STARTING OUT IN MARKETING YOUR CROPS.

KNOW YOUR BREAK-EVEN PRICE. “One of the most important things when you’re running a business or you’re farming is knowing what your costs are, knowing your breakeven,” Geswein says. That’s your pricing floor to aim for.

KNOW YOUR LOCAL MARKETS. “Know what your options are. Are there exporters? Are there processors? When do they normally buy? Are there times when they pay more? For river terminals, the markets from October to March are generally more competitive when they’re exporting. They’re less competitive in the spring during the South American harvest,” Geswein says.

USE FORWARD MARKETING. “It’s important not only to market the grain that’s in the bin, but also to market the new crop going forward,” he says. “It’s good to be proactive. Prices tend to be higher during the growing season before harvest.”

DIVERSIFY YOUR MARKETING METHODS. “Along the line of marketing in general is diversification, whether it’s using different contracts or a different shipment window,” he advises. Those include futures contracts, basis contracts, futures options and specialized contracts, such as an average seasonal price contract.

BEWARE OF BLACK SWAN EVENTS. These are rare, unexpected events that affect markets. It means you have to keep up on the news. “They can happen anywhere in the world and can have an impact,” Geswein says. The COVID-19 pandemic is an example.

– By Dan Looker

CALENDAR



June 1:

LIVING TO SERVE DAY OF SERVICE MINI GRANT DUE
Apply for up to \$400 to be used on a one-time community service project. Applications are due on the first of each month. Visit FFA.org/LivingToServe for more information.

June 1:

ALUMNI AND SUPPORTERS GRANT APPLICATION DUE
FFA Alumni and Supporters chapters can apply for several grants to be used for a variety of purposes. Visit FFA.org/AlumniGrants for more information.



June 15:

YEARLONG LIVING TO SERVE GRANT DUE
Looking to fund a service-learning project that spans the entire school year? Apply for a \$3,000 grant at FFA.org/LivingToServe.

July 1:

VARIOUS ALUMNI AND SUPPORTERS AWARDS APPLICATIONS DUE
Visit FFA.org/AlumniAwards for more information about Outstanding Alumni and Supporters Achievement, Outstanding Chapter and Outstanding State Association Awards.



Aug. 1:

FALL SEMESTER-LONG LIVING TO SERVE GRANT OPENS
FFA chapters can apply for up to \$1,200 to support a semester-long service-learning project. To find out more and apply, visit FFA.org/LivingToServe/Grants.



Camas County FFA member Logan Schofield was born with multiple birth defects, rendering him nonverbal, blind in one eye and bound to a wheelchair. But that hasn't stopped the Idaho chapter from helping Schofield fully experience FFA.

A junior at Camas County High School, Schofield and his two brothers, Max (ninth grade) and Xander (seventh grade), all participate in the school's agriculture program led by first-year agriculture teacher and FFA advisor Riely Geritz.

"I have a background working with people with disabilities, and I feel strongly that agriculture programs should be completely inclusive," Geritz says. "It isn't always easy, but with a combination of support from his incredible paraprofessional, Sharon Kepford, deliberate conversations, and trying new things, Logan is able to be part of our class and get the objective out of hands-on assignments. His classmates have made that happen; they work to include him, fight over who gets to sit by him and talk to him about his favorite TV shows."

Schofield's care team noticed he enjoys smelling different scents and realized an opportunity for a one-of-a-kind supervised agricultural experience (SAE).

"His family uses lavender to relax him,

and you can tell by his actions when he likes the way something smells," Geritz says. "His favorite scents are lavender and orange."

Schofield's paraprofessional educator found a recipe for bath bombs and helped Schofield mix the ingredients to make them for his SAE.

Fellow FFA members jumped onboard, creating natural body products including lip balms, foot and hand scrubs, bath salts, soaps and hand sanitizers to be included in Schofield's SAE, which they named For the Love of Logan. The products are sold and the proceeds are given to Schofield's family for his medical expenses.

"We began selling them at our town's Christmas tree lighting in December 2019, and by mid-January, we'd already sold \$500 worth of products," Geritz says. "It's been a great way for our members to learn skills and show compassion, which they can use in their future careers."

For more information about the products, contact Geritz at rgeritz@camascountyschools.org.

— By Jessica Mozo



Logan Schofield fully experiences FFA thanks to the help of his Idaho chapter members.

HIGH-TECH GARDENING

When members of the Sutherlin High School FFA, in Sutherlin, Ore., began experimenting with FarmBot, an open-source agricultural robot, their goal was to put it to work in their campus greenhouse.

"We used the technology to talk about things like automation and variable-rate application," says agricultural education instructor and FFA advisor Wes Crawford.

Funds from Grants for Growing, sponsored by retailer Tractor Supply Co., allowed students to build a 10×20-foot raised bed with tracks for the robot to run along. The robot was programmed to perform tasks

like planting, watering and weeding.

"It presented a lot of opportunities for students to learn about CNC [computer numerical controlled] farming, coding and running experiments," explains Sterling Foster, 17.

Daniel Lyons, a senior, admits that building and troubleshooting the track system proved challenging, but it also provided a chance to work as a team to overcome obstacles.

"The biggest takeaway for me was perseverance," adds Alyssa McCormick, 17. "Technology comes with a lot of variables. When you get it figured out and you're able to actually witness it working,

it's really amazing."

Sutherlin High School FFA set up the FarmBot at the Douglas County Fair in Roseburg, Ore., last summer. The project attracted a lot of attention, allowing students to showcase a unique FFA project and to challenge the views of a traditional agricultural program.

"An ag program is ultimately about production," Crawford says. "It's about all of the steps involved, from traditional ag methods to the real-world applications of technology, for things like irrigation and plant nutrition and the teamwork that goes into making it happen."

— By Jodi Helmer

GET GROWING!

Consider applying for Grants for Growing funds in the future. Learn more about the program at FFA.org/GrantsForGrowing.



The Sutherlin High School FFA Chapter experiments with FarmBot, an agricultural robot.



THE *feed*

Quiz: ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN AGRICULTURE

People who work in agriculture come from different backgrounds and ethnicities. How much do you know about diversity among agriculture producers across the United States? Test your knowledge!

— By Jessica Mozo

1. While the majority of U.S. farmers are white, Hispanic and Latino farmers make up the second-largest ethnic group. Of the 2,042,220 farms in the U.S., how many farms have producers (or people involved in making decisions for the operation) who are Hispanic, Latino or Spanish?
 - A. 35,470 (1.7%)
 - B. 18,338 (.9%)
 - C. 86,278 (4.2%)
 - D. 4,341 (.2%)
 - E. 60,083 (2.9%)
2. American Indian and Alaska Native producers make up another sizable ethnic group among U.S. farmers. How many farms have producers who identify as American Indian or Alaska Native?
3. The number of black and African-American farmers continues to grow. How many farms had black or African-American producers in the U.S. in 2017?
4. How many U.S. farms reported having Asian producers in 2017?
5. Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders represent a small ethnic group in U.S. agriculture. How many farms had Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander producers in 2017?

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

Illustration: fona2, Getty Images.
Silo poster: Colby Groves

BIG SCREEN on Middle America

THIS FEATURE FILM HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF AG SAFETY AND THE HEARTBEAT OF RURAL TOWNS.

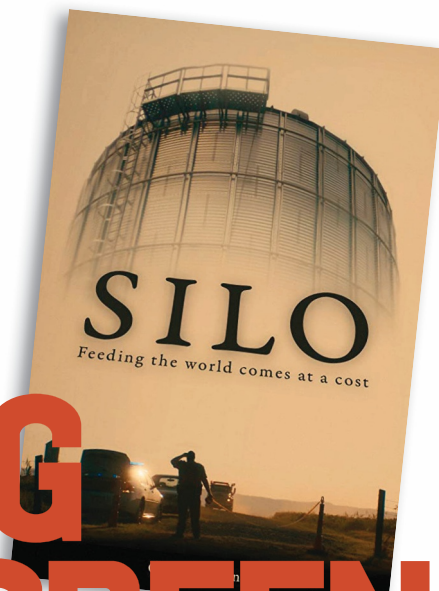
Corn turns to quicksand and a community turns to each other. That's the story of *Silo*, a feature film bringing light to a danger on American farms: grain entrapment. (Grain bins account for 71 percent of confined-space incidents reported over the last 50 years, including 15 fatalities in 2018.) Originally inspired by the tragic true story of two Illinois teenagers, the movie depicts a small farm town that comes together to save a teen from a 50-foot-tall silo.

"A lot of the 'fringe' states don't understand what's happening in rural America. This film sets out to tell people," says Quint Pottinger, whose New Haven, Ky., farm was used for production. "It says, 'Here's how far ag safety has come, and here's how far it has to go.' It also highlights a bigger mental health issue. Farmers face a lot of stressors (finances, time and weather, for example) to get things done, and they enter dangerous situations without even thinking about it."

Pottinger, a former Kentucky state FFA president from the Larue County Chapter, also served as an advisor for the film, ensuring that farm tasks and processes were depicted accurately. "There wasn't a whole lot of correcting, though," he says. "They really did their homework to make it as authentic as possible to modern farm life."

The film is available for community screenings and includes a post-show grain-handling safety discussion guide. To view the trailer and schedule an event, visit silotheffilm.com.

— By Lauren Denton



THE *feed*

#LIVINGTOSERVE

FFA MEMBERS DOCUMENT THEIR SERVICE PROJECTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA. JOIN THEM BY USING THE HASHTAG #LIVINGTOSERVE ON ANY SOCIAL PLATFORM. ALSO, BE SURE TO LOG YOUR SERVICE HOURS TO BE PART OF THE LIVING TO SERVE CHAPTER CHALLENGE TO HELP FFA REACH 930,000 HOURS OF SERVICE BEFORE THE NEXT FFA CONVENTION & EXPO. ANSWER THE CALL FOR ALL TO SEE WITH #FFACHALLENGEACCEPTED.



FFA members volunteered with the Tree Foundation of Kern this morning to plant trees at Beale Park. #livingtoserve

North FFA



Last Friday, a few of our FFA members went to Canton to help families who were affected by the tornadoes. #livingtoserve

Kaufman FFA



From the **CORNHUSKER** **STATE to CAPITOL HILL**

Every summer, hundreds of blue and gold jackets flood the hill of Washington, D.C. FFA members from across the country take part in the Washington Leadership Conference (WLC) in the nation's capital to become engaged citizens and to make measurable positive differences in their communities. Getting from small-town USA to D.C. is never an easy process. And it doesn't happen in a silo.

The Lakeview FFA Alumni and Supporters in Nebraska believe so strongly in the power of WLC that they take on the task of raising money for scholarships for their local chapter.

"We really think that one of our greatest natural resources in Nebraska is our youth," says June Loseke, president of the alumni and supporters chapter. "We have to equip them with hands-on experiences to broaden their perspectives. Life-changing events like WLC follow them into

adulthood and can help shape them into future leaders."

Every year, these volunteers in Lakeview partner with the county fair to smoke meats, make sandwiches and raise funds for scholarships. With 100 percent of this financial support going back to the local FFA chapter, alumni members can support the full travel and registration to send five members to Washington, D.C., every summer.

"In order to maximize our volunteers' limited time and resources, we found the right opportunity in our neighborhood," Loseke says. "The fair is low input, people already attend, and it makes a natural connection to FFA members' work."

Whether you are an active member, an alumnus or a supporter, there are plenty of ways to get involved in the Washington Leadership Conference. Learn more at FFA.org/WLC.

— By Bev Flatt



Lakeview FFA members join alumni and supporters on an annual veterinary clinic tour.



Members and alumni and supporters collaborate on a fencing repair project.

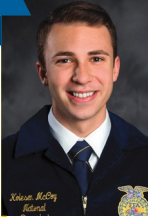
NATIONAL FFA OFFICER Q&A



THE LAST LINE OF THE FFA MOTTO, LIVING TO SERVE, SIGNIFIES THE VITAL ROLE SERVICE PLAYS IN OUR ORGANIZATION. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT AN FFA SERVICE PROJECT YOU PARTICIPATED IN THAT MADE AN IMPACT IN YOUR COMMUNITY?



Kolesen McCoy



NATIONAL FFA PRESIDENT

I remember visiting an elementary school with fellow FFA members to read to students, hang out and

share some conversation before summer break. These unique moments of joy seen in others can always serve as our greatest reminder of the impact that Living to Serve can have on people around the world.



Kourtney Lehman



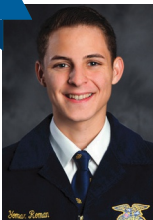
NATIONAL FFA SECRETARY

Every year, my chapter held a Helping Hands BBQ. We'd sell tickets for a trip dinner and host the event

during one of the home basketball games. The proceeds from the BBQ would go to a family we selected – as a chapter – who needed a little extra help. Every year, we were able to donate several thousand dollars. It was an amazing experience: good food, good people and a good cause.



Yomar Roman



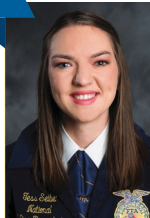
SOUTHERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

Puerto Rico once faced the threat of a Zika virus outbreak, as it quickly spread across the island. My chapter decided to take action, because one thing FFA has taught us is that we can always take Living to Serve to another level. We used a group of aromatic

plants that repel mosquitos to make our school safer and to set an example. We learned to always care for others and to do our best to make a safer society.



Tess Seibel



EASTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

This summer, we packed snack kits at our state FFA leadership camp. By working together, over 2,500 snack kits were packed in three hours! The kits were sent to a local food pantry for students in summer programs.

The neat part is that this project was possible through a Living to Serve Grant provided by FFA. By living out the last line of the FFA motto, we realized how important service truly is.



Mamie Hertel



CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT

My chapter served our community by participating in a pumpkin-carving event. About a week before Halloween, members paired up with elementary students to assist them in carving a pumpkin in our high school gym. This activity

allowed members to connect and create mentor relationships with younger students, and it encouraged a sense of community within our small school.



Lyle Logemann



WESTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

One of my favorite service projects involved being a horse handler for Royal Family Kids Camp just outside of Capitan, N.M. The camp serves underprivileged children in foster care who experience positive life-changing moments. The New Mexico FFA state president and I gave horseback rides to dozens of students who had never ridden a horse, and it appeared to be quite therapeutic for them.

SOIL HORIZONS

Six FFA experts tell us what's up with the layers of soil under our feet.

O HORIZON

The O horizon is typically at the top of the soil structure and is made up of mostly organic matter. This organic matter is vital to the growth of crops and other plants because it holds nutrients such as carbon, phosphorus, nitrogen and sulfur. The O horizon is formed over a process of hundreds of years from organic materials that slowly decompose. The O horizon also serves to absorb water and build soil structure.

– Ryan McMurray, Moapa Valley FFA

E HORIZON

The E horizon is a zone of eluviation, where organic matter, clay or both have washed out of the layer, usually giving it a lighter color and making it feel ashy or chalky to the touch. The texture is generally similar to the horizon above it but lower in clay content than the horizon below. The E horizon is not present in all soil profiles and can be found on sites with a high temporary water table or forest soils.

– Lilly Cook, North Shelby FFA

A HORIZON

Most commonly called topsoil, the A horizon is a layer of mineral soil that has a defined soil structure, and it is mostly made up of humus (decayed organic matter). The A horizon may be a result of soil disturbance by plant and animal activity. It is one of the layers we test for texture in the soils contest.

– Lacey Jones, Virgin Valley FFA

B HORIZON

The B horizon, or subsoil, is referred to as the zone of accumulation due to buildup of minerals leached out of the A and E horizons. This leaching process is known as illuviation. The B horizon contains more clay than the topsoil and contains lower levels of organic matter. Soil structure in this horizon is often blocky or prismatic due to the higher clay content.

– Noah Iles, Higginsville FFA

C HORIZON

The C horizon is usually the deepest in the pit and the closest to bedrock. It is usually unaffected by the soil formation process and doesn't have much layering. It is very close in structure to weathered parent material bedrock.

– Travis Buckler, Princeton FFA

R HORIZON

The R horizon, also called bedrock, is the lowest layer. In some places, the R horizon might be 60 feet below the topsoil. In other places, it could be as little as 6 feet below or less. The R horizon is characterized by tightly bound, unbreakable materials, unlike the looser layers above it. The R horizon is commonly made up of sandstone, granite or limestone.

– Mackenzie Kephart, Moapa Valley FFA

OUR SOIL SAVVY AUTHORS

MEET OUR EXPERTS. These six FFA members have successfully competed in soil judging career development events (CDEs) and share their soil horizon expertise for this graphic.

RYAN McMURRAY is the president of the Moapa Valley FFA Chapter in Nevada. He has been on his chapter's soil judging and homesite evaluation teams for four years and has led the teams as a CDE chair for the past three years. He has been the state high individual for both events multiple times.

LACEY JONES is a member of the Virgin Valley FFA Chapter in Mesquite, Nev. She has been on the chapter's soil judging team and competed in the state soil judging contest for the last two years. Jones is also a member of the school's flag football, track and cross-country teams.

LILLY COOK is the chapter reporter at North Shelby High School in Missouri. She was a member of the first-place Missouri State FFA Soils CDE team last year, and she placed second individually. Outside of FFA, Cook plays basketball and softball, and she is an active member of NHS, FCCLA and student council. Her supervised agricultural experience (SAE) is growing sweet corn.

NOAH ILES of the Higginsville FFA Chapter in Missouri developed strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills through his involvement in the soil judging CDE. Many of his favorite high school memories were made traveling to soil judging competitions with friends. His success has sparked an interest in pursuing a degree in natural resources.

TRAVIS BUCKLER has been a member of the Princeton FFA in Texas for three years. He raises calves with his family on their 680-acre farm, and his SAE is beef production. His favorite CDE event is soil judging, and his favorite chapter activity is the FFA Week Dodgeball Tournament.

MACKENZIE KEPHART currently serves as the Nevada FFA southern zone president. She has been on the winning Nevada FFA Soils CDE for two years and has attended various national FFA events and competed in livestock evaluation at the national level. Kephart will pursue a degree in livestock genetics and nutrition at Montana State University in the fall of 2020.



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Waipahu
Intermediate
FFA members
Kayla Nguyen and
Cheydon Agos.

One Big Ohana

*For these FFA members in Hawaii,
agricultural education is like a family.*

*By Justin Davey
Photography by David Ekstrom*



It's a state as lush in landscape as it is in history. Stretched across eight main islands (Hawaii, Maui, Oahu, Kauai, Molokai, Lanai, Niihau and Kahoolawe) far-flung off the western coast of the United States, the topography of Hawaii consists mainly of soaring volcanoes that plunge into low coastline.

The islands were colonized roughly 1,500 years ago. Farming practices then, as in most developing areas, were primitive and labor intensive. It's a part of Hawaiian history that some FFA members from Waipahu, about 30 minutes west of Honolulu on the island of Oahu, reflect on and respect. But while these members admire the past, they are forging ahead in a new era. They strive to grow, lead and succeed through agricultural education. In Hawaii, FFA is in bloom.

Agricultural Education Ecosystem

The Waipahu Intermediate FFA Chapter is regarded as a model FFA program in Hawaii. It is one of only two middle school FFA chapters in the state and the only middle school chapter on Oahu. The island may be small, but the 150 members of this urban chapter learn big lessons about agriculture and food. (A year-round tropical climate is ideal for growing many crops, including coffee, macadamia nuts, sugarcane, pineapple and many other fruits, and its access to the ocean makes fishing and aquaculture a staple.) Members maximize lawn space on the school grounds, build their own raised garden beds and grow their own vegetables as part of their supervised agricultural experience (SAE) projects. "One third of our FFA experience is an SAE, and I require all my students to do an agriscience project," says Ken Kozuma, the agriculture teacher and FFA advisor at Waipahu Intermediate

School, which serves eighth-graders. "At their age, I think that's the best SAE for them to do; they research and experiment. They are growing things from ground zero. A lot of times, in the beginning, I have to encourage them to just do it, just try something. Then they learn through trial and error."

Kozuma partners with Jeffrey Garvey, the agriculture teacher and FFA advisor at Waipahu High School just up the road, to create an agricultural education ecosystem that captures students' attention at a young age, then excites them to continue to participate through high school.

"In the last two years, our intermediate school classes were just introductory – the basics of agriculture," Kozuma says. "But after attending a National Association of Agricultural Educators conference last year, I decided to focus this year more directly on agriscience and experiments." The courses are similar to a core agriculture class offered at the high school and provide a nice, broad base for students who decide to continue ag education after eighth grade.

"The high school goes in depth in more areas," he adds. "It offers more specialized classes."

"I have more of the applied courses," Garvey explains. Students at Waipahu High School, "ultimately work heavily on job training and learning to run our aquaculture and hydroponics systems, doing disease testing and microscopy work, growing algae and doing other things in our biotech class."

They also familiarize themselves with standard protocols, procedures and checklists that come in any business, Garvey says, by checking various aspects of the tilapia tanks in the aquaculture system. "What do you do when you show up at your job in the morning?" he asks students. "You don't pull out your phone. You go right to work, check everything, write things down, report incidents." Garvey simulates what students would do at a real job, so even

Clockwise from top right: Ag students harvest lettuce; Plants are grown on campus for SAE projects; Waipahu High School FFA president Vheena Sistoza works in the greenhouse; Ag student William Sagapolutele checks tilapia; Waipahu High School FFA advisor Jeffrey Garvey gives instructions; Waipahu Intermediate FFA member Noelle Espinosa works in a raised bed; Waipahu Intermediate FFA advisor Ken Kozuma walks the school garden.



if they don't go into agriculture, at least they come out of there knowing how to work better.

Keeping Members Engaged

The agricultural education ecosystem in Waipahu has captured FFA members' attention.

"I'm very interested in chemistry and physics, so being able to see how even the smallest measure of life, like a cell, can play into agriculture interests me," says Waipahu Intermediate FFA member Cheydon Agos. "I joined FFA because I was working on a science project and my science teacher thought I should talk about it with Mr. Kozuma to get another point of view. When Mr. Kozuma started talking about different aspects of my project and FFA, it opened my eyes to a whole new agricultural perspective."

"There's so much you can do in agriculture, and you meet a lot of people," adds Waipahu Intermediate FFA member Kayla Nguyen. "FFA is like one big ohana [family], and it's amazing that you can share your passions in agriculture with people across the country. No matter what education or career I decide to pursue, I know I'll always advocate for natural resources."

"In eighth grade, our FFA experience touched on community service and giving back to our community," says Vheena Sistoza, who is now the Waipahu High School FFA Chapter president. "Mr. Kozuma took us on a lot of field trips around the community, and agriculture became a passion for me."

Waipahu High School operates under a career academy model, where students choose which education pathway they want to take, such as health and sciences, arts and communications, industrial and engineering technology, professional and public services, and natural resources. While many activities and interests vie for high school students' time, and some students decide not to continue with agriculture (which falls under the natural resources pathway), FFA is finding ways to keep members engaged.

"I'll definitely participate in FFA in high school," Agos says. "It has given me so many opportunities to do new things outside the classroom, and another four years with FFA would really benefit my education."

"FFA has shown me that agriculture can be hands on, but it can also be about advocacy," Sistoza adds. "I realized that agriculture encompasses so much of our economy, and I keep learning more and more about how the world revolves around agriculture."

Waipahu Intermediate FFA has seen some early success, too. In its first year in existence (2017-18), Waipahu Intermediate FFA saw five members qualify for the National FFA Agriscience Fair. In its second year, seven members qualified. Kozuma credits that success to members getting to choose an agriscience project that interests them and then putting in the hard work to see their projects through.

"They get to choose what they want to do, and I think that really helps to create motivation and passion," he

says. "I think the kids who are able to find success are the ones who are passionate about what they do and find a greater purpose in what they're doing." •



More Cool Hawaiian Chapters

With 19 chapters across five islands, FFA is alive and well in Hawaii. Check out these five unique programs from across the islands.

- Kalani FFA (Oahu) offers a unique focus on robotics and received a FarmBeats kit from the National FFA Organization and Microsoft in 2018.
- Kapaa FFA (Kauai) is an emerging FFA chapter that is being revitalized after 30 years of dormancy.
- Lahainaluna FFA (Maui) is the oldest agricultural education program in the western U.S. and can date its ag classes back to the 1830s, almost a century before FFA.
- Molokai FFA (Molokai) serves the only high school on the entire island. Fun fact: The school mascot is the Molokai Farmers.
- Konawaena FFA (Big Island) was home to famous FFA alumni and astronaut Ellis Onizuka, who took an FFA emblem into space.



Watch Our Video

Hover your phone's camera over this code to learn more about Waipahu Intermediate FFA members' agriscience success.



PAVING HER WAY TO AGRICULTURE

THIS AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER'S UNEXPECTED PATH TO AG LEADERSHIP BEGAN WITH AG EDUCATION.

Dr. Jewel Bronaugh's path to leadership in the agriculture sector wasn't exactly typical – and she gives ag-based youth programs the credit for helping her find her way. Bronaugh currently serves as commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), but it wasn't the career she anticipated earlier in life.

Bronaugh grew up in Petersburg, Va., and attended James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va., where she earned a bachelor's degree in education in 1989. Following in her parents' footsteps, Bronaugh became a teacher, then earned her master's and doctorate degrees in adult education and career and technical education, respectively, at Blacksburg's Virginia Tech.

It wasn't until 2001 that Bronaugh began her career in agriculture, which is when she became a 4-H Extension specialist at Virginia State University (VSU) in her hometown.

"Taking the position in 4-H and youth development in VSU's College of Agriculture changed the trajectory of my career; I was planning on building a career as a college professor," says Bronaugh, the 16th commissioner of VDACS and the first African-American woman in the U.S. to serve in this capacity. "The work I did with Virginia Cooperative Extension helped develop the core of what I believe in today, and it's what introduced me to the wonderful world of agriculture."

While in that role, Bronaugh earned a national certification in

bullying prevention and developed and delivered programs to help Virginia 4-H leaders identify and combat bullying. She soon became VSU's associate Extension administrator and was then appointed the dean of VSU's College of Agriculture in 2010.

Bronaugh became the state executive director for the USDA Farm Service Agency in 2015 and later served as the executive director of the Center for Agricultural Research, Engagement and Outreach at VSU.

Due to her many years building a career in agricultural leadership, Bronaugh stepped into her current role in 2018. It's an opportunity she calls a "dream come true."

"Serving as commissioner of VDACS allows me to represent agriculture not only on the state level but also nationally and internationally," Bronaugh says. "It's a unique job that I feel truly fortunate to have, and I take the responsibility very seriously."

Because of the impact agricultural education had on her career and the many ways she has seen both 4-H and FFA influence young people, Bronaugh is a strong proponent.

"Organizations like FFA and 4-H can empower our youth and help them develop leadership skills in a safe, fun environment, and their involvement can help them stand out in a really positive way," she says. "Being part of these organizations has the potential to be a game changer for young people and lead them to grow in ways that will prove beneficial no matter what they decide to pursue."

– By Jessica Walker Boehm

“Organizations like FFA and 4-H can empower our youth and help them develop leadership skills in a safe, fun environment, and their involvement can help them stand out in a really positive way.”

– DR. JEWEL BRONAUGH

TRADE SCHOOL OR COLLEGE: WHICH IS THE BEST PATH FOR YOU?

PROS OF TRADE SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Is more affordable
- Has increasing job salaries
- Starts and finishes faster than college
- Has smaller class sizes
- Offers a robust job-placement program
- Has a wide variety of trade programs, including high-precision skills training
- Is typically local and more accessible – no dorm costs



FFA offers many scholarships to students attending trade schools and college alike. Check out all scholarships at [FFA.org/Scholarships](https://www.ffa.org/Scholarships).

To learn more about careers in agriculture, visit [AgExplorer.com](https://www.AgExplorer.com).

Most of you know I love leadership-oriented youth organizations, and FFA is my favorite in this category. Growing up as a farm kid and milking cows each morning before classes, I understand how an agribusiness work ethic can transcend into entrepreneurial business successes.

In the spirit of helping the next generation of agriculturalists pursue the opportunities that align with their interests the closest, I thought I would share some comparative points between career tech and college.

There are many differences, but there are also some similarities. For example, both educational systems offer online classes. Both college and trade schools have job placement and career services.

Choosing a career path is not just about the money; it's about your personal growth.

If you prefer starting a career sooner instead of waiting four to six years to complete college, or if you like learning practical skills in the classroom instead of gaining book knowledge, then a trade school is a viable choice. Some trade positions are earning up to \$90 per hour based on supply and demand, and subject-matter expertise.

But if you are planning a professional career, are attracted to international studies or are interested in a wide array of subjects, college is an important consideration. College is also required to earn a master's degree or a doctorate, which opens the door to many high-paying jobs and continued learning opportunities.

Make the choice with factors like budget, personal life goals, education timeline and an understanding of how you learn best. Talk to FFA leaders and school counselors, visit local institutions, evaluate programs, and speak with graduates and other students to learn from their experiences. Do your homework, prepare to dig in and have fun.

– By Bob Funk

PROS OF COLLEGE EDUCATION

- Has more potential for better-paying jobs
- Has greater upward salary trajectory
- Has extensive class and career path options
- Gives exposure to a broad range of educational experiences
- Is a must-do for professional career fields and advanced education
- Gives a degree that stays with the individual despite career and field changes
- Helps develop a world view



Bob Funk Sr. is the founder, president and a board member of Express Employment Professionals, and an FFA donor and supporter.

A close-up photograph of hands rolling out dough with a wooden rolling pin on a floured surface. The hands are dusted with flour, and the rolling pin is positioned diagonally across the frame. The dough is a light yellow color and is being flattened into a large, irregular shape. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly a countertop, with a purple cloth visible in the upper left corner.

a recipe for sweet success

This FFA member runs the
business of her dreams –
at just 16 years old.

By Jami Stall

Photography by Dan Videtich



If you don't yet know the name **Alea Ogle**, you will. This 16-year-old stands poised for sweet success – most likely as a baker.

She's already made a name for herself in Streator, Ill., her rural hometown near Peoria (about 80 miles southwest of Chicago). Folks there have followed Ogle's trajectory, along with her pastries, for five years already.

"I started selling cinnamon rolls, blueberry scones, muffins and cookies at our farmers market when I was 12. After a while, I had a lot of regular customers and followers on social media," she says. "When I saw customers eating my products and loving them and wanting more, that kind of got me going and really motivated me to open my own shop."

She gives a good measure

of credit to her family for introducing her to batter bowls and baking sheets at a young age. From the time she was 4 or 5 years old – while kids her age were making pretend cookies in their play kitchens – Ogle was discovering the joy of cooking in her grandmother's kitchen.

"I was always in there with her and my great-aunt and mom; they'd let me help," she says. "My grandma taught me a lot of baking. Most everything else I learned from watching YouTube videos or Pinterest and testing unique recipes in my own kitchen."

So for members of the Streator community who

already knew of her locally acclaimed baked goods, it came as little surprise when Ogle opened her own storefront bakery business and coffee shop on Main Street last June.

The then 15-year-old opened the doors of her Blue Eyed Rascal Baking Co. at 6 a.m. and completely sold out of everything by 8 a.m. "I had to start baking all over again, and as soon as I'd fill the case, it would empty out in no time. It kept up like that the whole day. I finally had to close two hours early because I was all out of raw ingredients," she says.

Now, as her bakery approaches its first anniversary, Ogle knows vastly more about managing the business and maintaining life outside the bakery. She plans for customer demands (like baking enough of her signature scones), orders supplies, hires and manages employees (one employee is her older sister, Helena) and handles other business-related activities while maintaining her junior-year classes and actively participating in the Streator Township FFA Chapter. Somehow, she even finds time to serve as the chapter reporter. But being a normal teenager and having fun remains a focused item on her to-do list.

"She's always been a go-getter," says her mother, Jody Ogle, who explains her role as the corporate officer and investor in the Blue Eyed Rascal Baking Co. As a former accountant, Mom also manages payroll and the books until her daughter can acquire those skills. A computer programmer at a full-time job, Jody Ogle says her daughter runs the business and is, in fact, the lead baker, owner and operator.

"In one week, Alea had someone come for the health department inspection and

a fire safety inspector and one other, and they'd ask, 'Where's your mother?' She had to explain she was the owner, and they needed to talk to her instead," her mother recounts. "I stop in on Saturdays to help out with the dishes or to put cookies in the bag for customers, but that's about it."

Transforming the business from farmers market fare to a brick-and-mortar bakery came about quite organically. The teen's passion for baking dovetailed with her parents' penchant for helping revitalize Streator's downtown. On a committee dedicated to bringing back Main Street, her parents purchased a run-down, old brick building intent on eventually renovating and perhaps renting it to an incubator business. But as luck would have it, their daughter's small-batch baked goods had yielded a big batch of social media fans and faithful customers who wanted more than her cottage-kitchen enterprise could handle. She mused about what it would be like to open a bakery someday. Before long, she would know.

Timing Is Everything

Ogle has been homeschooled since first grade, but she began taking ag courses at Streator Township High School during her freshman year. FFA advisor Riley Hintzsche recruited her into FFA after having her older sister in the program. "We had a really competitive food science team, and I knew Alea would enjoy that and be very good at it," he says. "But once her baking expanded, she became more involved, and her record book evolved into what it is today. Then the plans for her bakery opened up, and it was like 'Holy cow, this is





monumental for someone her age to be taking on!’ It’s been really cool to watch it morph into what it is today.”

When Ogle closes the bakery at 2 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, she zips over to the high school by 2:10 p.m., having already put in a full day’s work. She attends Hintzsche’s Teach Ag Intern class, in which she student-instructs Intro to Ag to underclassmen. Ogle also continues her homeschool courses in the evening and during any downtime in the day.

Hintzsche says Ogle motivates other students and many 4-H members by showing them what it takes to run a business. She also employs two other ag students part time at her bakery. “She inspires our students, because they can see what she’s really doing at that bakery every single day and that not all days are going to be a piece of cake – literally and figuratively. Alea comes in at the end of her baking shift, and some days she looks like a hot mess,” he says. “The kids look at her and ask, ‘What

When Alea Ogle closes the bakery at 2 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, she zips over to the high school by 2:10 p.m. for ag classes, having already put in a full day’s work.

did you do today?’ And she’ll tell them everything, and they just look at her in amazement. I can see she’s had a rough day, but she’s still at class, willing to be there and do the best she can.”

“I start baking around 4:30 in the morning, so I’m usually in bed by at least 9 at night,” she says. “I work and take classes, and I still have laundry and dishes and things like that I do to help out at home, but it’s all about time management. I procrastinate on some things, like my record book, and I still do plenty of fun things like any normal teenager, like going to lunch or dinner or shopping with friends, visiting my boyfriend and going to all kinds of FFA events and competitions. Last fall, I closed the bakery for a week because there was no way I was going to miss going to national convention. It’s all about balance.” •

A Batch of FFA Experiences

As in any endeavor, you typically only get out what you put into FFA. Alea Ogle has done just about anything and everything in FFA, according to FFA advisor Riley Hintzsche, which might partially explain Ogle’s personal growth and career success. “It must be a common mold in her family, because she and her sister, Helena, are cut from a similar cloth,” Hintzsche says. “Alea has been involved in the ag communications career development event (CDE), ag ed CDE, the dairy foods CDE, and she was on a national food science team that placed 11th in the nation (she placed 12th individually). She is currently the chapter reporter and has her record book in ag processing. Plus, she’s the Teach Ag intern, assisting me with instructing the class several days a week.”

Hintzsche tells students that in order to achieve their goals, it often comes down to knowing they can do anything with the right resources and the right connections. “What I find fascinating about Alea is that we all have moments when we are unsure of ourselves, but she’s able to find those who love and support her, and she is able to push through those times of self-doubt. That inspires our students. And she is very willing to always learn something new.”





SHUT EYES FOR

FFA CHAPTERS CREATE DISASTER PLANS TO HELP THEIR COMMUNITIES WEATHER DIFFICULT SITUATIONS.

In 1998, Randy Thies got a call from Sarasota County Schools asking if the Sarasota Vo-Ag FFA Chapter at Suncoast Technical College could take care of cats and dogs belonging to first responders during an upcoming hurricane.

The school had no formal disaster plan for animals back then, but Thies, the agriculture teacher and FFA advisor, agreed to provide shelter and care for 35 companion animals. It sparked a tradition of pitching in during disasters.

“When hurricanes come through, there is a huge need for volunteers to come in and help with the animals,” Thies explains. “It just continued to grow.”

Over the past two decades, Suncoast Technical College has joined a handful of other local schools to turn their campuses into makeshift shelters for animals in need, and the FFA chapter has become an integral part of the disaster response team in Sarasota, Fla. During Hurricane Irma in 2017, FFA members helped care for 1,500 animals sheltered in three county schools.

This community dedication isn’t limited to Sarasota. FFA chapters across the country are creating disaster plans to help the animals in their communities during natural disasters, ranging from hurricanes, floods and wildfires to threats to their schools. Their responses are often essential to weathering catastrophic events and rebuilding in the aftermath of a tragedy.

BY JODI HELMER
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN HENDRIX

FROM THE STORM



Left: Gridley FFA members create a plan for saving livestock during the 2017 Camp Fire in California.

Above: Plant City FFA member Elizabeth Beck-Beckler shows her love for animals.

Opposite: During Hurricane Irma in 2017, community members in Sarasota, Fla., brought their pets to Sarasota Vo-Ag FFA for care.

A successful disaster response plan requires planning, execution and continual review. FFA chapters share their tips for getting it right.

CONSULT WITH EXPERTS. Mission Valley FFA met with a representative from the Department of Homeland Security who provided recommendations for what to include in each run-hide-fight bag. “We did some research and recommendations for disaster kits ranging from a few items to 50 items,” recalls Kelly Hoelting, agriculture teacher and FFA advisor. “We really wanted his personal opinion on what would work best for our school.”

APPOINT A LEAD CONTACT. Gridley FFA advisor Jenny Kaslin says having one person take the lead on communication helps students and staff know who to contact in a disaster. “Otherwise, everyone’s asking people different questions and then information gets tossed around – and it may not be the correct information,” she says.

PARTNER WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS. There is strength in numbers. Sarasota Vo-Ag FFA advisor Randy Thies suggests reaching out to local partners to ask how FFA chapters can assist with other disaster response efforts for maximum impact.

STAY PREPARED. In addition to coordinating and participating in regular disaster response drills, Mission Valley FFA officer Will Blythe believes it’s important to conduct regular inventories of disaster response aids. He is part of a team who checks all of the run-hide-fight bags and replaces missing or expired items such as flashlight batteries. “When we do an inventory, we can make sure all of the bags have everything they should in case of a disaster,” he says.

HOW TO DEVISE A DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN

PREPARING FOR THE WORST

As part of its disaster plan, the Sarasota Vo-Ag FFA Chapter participates in annual trainings that involve disinfecting and setting up kennels to ensure the process is seamless in the event of a hurricane or other natural disaster.

The kennels were harder to set up than students expected, some members admit.

“When there’s a hurricane coming, it happens super fast, and it’s good to know how to do everything in advance so we can just start loading up and getting ready and automatically know what to do,” says FFA member Whitney Langdon. “We want everything to be perfect.”

Members also received training through the American Red Cross and the Florida State Animal Response Coalition, a nonprofit organization that trains volunteers to save and protect companion animals during natural and manmade disasters. The

training mirrors the lessons Thies teaches in the veterinary assisting class.

“A lot of students love animals and want to go on and be veterinarians or work in animal care facilities,” Thies says. “Getting the background of helping animals and communities when a storm comes is good for them.”

Learning how to set up a shelter, properly clean and disinfect cages, recognize signs of illness and distress, and care for and feed animals prepared member Cami Golden to deal with unfamiliar and frightened animals during a hurricane or other natural disasters.

It also provided valuable insight about the career possibilities. It was “a good training opportunity to help us get a good baseline idea of what it would be like to handle animals in our careers,” she says.

In 2019, after Hurricane Dorian battered Plant City, Fla., Aniyah Betancourt, Kylie Harris, Yarel Santiago, Matthew Ayuso and other members of the Plant City FFA Chapter

decided it was time to prepare for the next disaster. The chapter focused on making sure local animals were safe.

"We tend to have a lot of storms in Florida; it's just a part of living here," Harris says. "Hurricane season can be devastating to some of us, and a lot of people don't stop to think that animals are also affected by this storm."

The chapter recently received an FFA Day of Service Mini Grant to host a disaster-relief drive to collect pet supplies. Its goal is to gather food, blankets, paper towels and other necessities to create relief kits that will be donated to two local shelters later this year, according to Cassie Miles, agriscience instructor and FFA advisor.

PARTNERING TO PROTECT ANIMALS

In 2017, after the Oroville Dam was damaged and members of the small town of Oroville, Calif., were forced to evacuate, the Gridley FFA Chapter realized it was time to create a plan for saving livestock in the event of a disaster. Its disaster plan proved invaluable when the Camp Fire, the deadliest and most destructive fire in California history, devastated local communities in 2018.

"When towns close to us started evacuating, our fairgrounds became the evacuation center for animals," recalls agriculture teacher and FFA advisor Jenny Kaslin. "We messaged our students through Facebook and Instagram that it was time to put the disaster plan into action, and we needed help setting up panels and pens."

Chapter president Zane Young was one of the stu-

dents who drove livestock trailers into danger zones to move horses, sheep, goats, pigs and chickens to the rescue site at the fairgrounds.

Once the animals were settled at the fairgrounds, FFA members set up a feeding schedule and reached out to other chapters to take turns providing food and water to the rescued animals.

"Our plan through this was to divide the tasks. We had a group of people just unloading truckloads of donations; groups moving animals; groups setting up food and water; and groups doing first aid," Young recalls. "It was good to have a plan in place to avoid chaos and good for people to see FFA kids coming through, to know that there is an organization that is ready to serve its community and help everyone get through a disaster. Without a plan, that wouldn't happen." •

"IT WAS
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THROUGH."

-ZANE YOUNG



In 2016, Mission Valley High School in Eskridge, Kan., received an FFA Living to Serve Grant to create disaster kits for each of its classrooms. The run-hide-fight bags contain items that could be used if an intruder comes into the school, including a first aid kit, flashlights, duct tape and wasp spray (which has a longer spray radius than pepper spray). The FFA chapter also put together tornado kits.

"Our FFA chapter is one of the largest organizations in our school," explains chapter officer Grace Deters. "We really felt that we needed to take initiative."

PREPARING FOR A DIFFERENT KIND OF DISASTER

FFA *in the* USA

LOOKING FOR WAYS TO RAISE MONEY FOR YOUR CHAPTER? NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO INCORPORATE ONE OF THESE IDEAS INTO YOUR PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES TO RAISE FUNDS – AND AWARENESS – FOR FFA. – Compiled by Julie Woodard

ALABAMA

In May, the Wetumpka FFA Championship Rodeo partners with National FFA Alumni and Supporters from around the county to bring the community a family-friendly rodeo. One hundred percent of the proceeds benefit FFA members.



ALASKA

In partnership with North Pole Coffee Roasters, Silent Springs FFA sells bags of coffee beans and grounds in a variety of unique flavors in Interior Alaska.

ARIZONA

Every year, chapters, along with the Arizona FFA Foundation, sell raffle tickets for a John Deere Gator. Half of the money goes to the chapter that sells the most tickets; the other half goes to the foundation.

ARKANSAS

Paris FFA members sell honey that is harvested from their farm. Sweet!

COLORADO

Plateau Valley FFA organizes an annual gymkhana series in the summer, where skill-based contests are held. This family-friendly event features horsemanship that recalls Western and cowboy traditions.

DELAWARE

Several chapters throughout the state hold floral arrangement sales during the Valentine's season.

FLORIDA

Strawberry Crest hosts an annual "Ag-stravaganza" and invites ag education students to participate in a talent show, bake-off, cake auction and night of fellowship to support the program.

GEORGIA

Chapters across the state grow and sell greenhouse plants – from Boston ferns to geraniums – to bring communities together to support local FFA members.

HAWAII

Hawaii FFA is working on a bill that would fund a coordinator position and student and teacher trainings. Members traveled to the capitol building to testify and provide written testimony in support of the bill.

IDAHO

University of Idaho Collegiate FFA makes aroma kits featuring 31 aromas from the national food science career development event (CDE). The kits are made by students and shipped all over the country.

ILLINOIS

Carlville FFA collects milk caps to recycle and turn into park benches for its school.

IOWA

Members from the North Linn FFA hosted a poverty meal to raise funds to purchase backpack meals for students in need.

KANSAS

Throughout the state, chapters and districts hold change drives, where donors give loose coins. The funds help with disaster relief.

KENTUCKY

Last September, the Kentucky FFA Foundation's newest annual tradition – the Blue and Gold Gala – netted more than \$95,000 in one evening to provide innovation grants for agriculture teachers and scholarships for Kentucky FFA members to attend the Washington Leadership Conference.

LOUISIANA

In February, the Louisiana FFA Foundation held its first-ever Blue and Gold Gala. All funds went toward the association's general fund in support of nearly 25,000 ag education students.

MAINE

Washburn FFA plans to host a cow chip bingo game. Proceeds will help to fund chapter events.

MARYLAND

Members and alumni of Southern FFA host an annual car show the last Saturday in April. Each car owner pays an entry fee, and judges evaluate the cars. Awards are given in a variety of categories.

MASSACHUSETTS

Essex FFA hosts a poultry auction each fall to raise money to attend the National FFA Convention & Expo. Community members can sell or donate

items for bidding – from live chicks, turkeys and laying hens to rabbits, geese and flowers.

MICHIGAN

Mason FFA members tap maple trees and collect sap to make pure maple syrup. They then sell the syrup to support their chapter.

MINNESOTA

During the winter, Minnewaska FFA puts on an ice fishing tournament to raise support for the alumni, supporters and FFA members within its local community.

MISSOURI

Nevada FFA builds a free-hanging porch swing in its shop class and raffles it off to help send members to the Washington Leadership Conference.

MONTANA

To combat winter blues mixed in with cases of the Mondays, Fairfield FFA members sell hot chocolate to students and staff each week. This project is a productive fundraiser and a hit among customers.

NEBRASKA

Perkins County FFA works a slushy stand at its fairgrounds. Members mix pop and Kool-Aid in their slushies, and they typically raise over \$500.

NEVADA

Agricultural mechanics students at Nile Valley FFA fabricate and sell flood-irrigation gates for the many farmers in the area.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Every year, the state puts on a silent auction at its state convention. Supporters of the association donate items that

are then auctioned off throughout the weekend.

NEW JERSEY

To raise funds for Adopt-A-Family and to promote holiday cheer, Monmouth County Vocational FFA hosted a schoolwide Pajamas-for-Fams Day, where students and staff paid money to participate.

NEW MEXICO

Des Moines FFA gets into the holiday spirit by selling Christmas wreaths. Members create the decorations by hand from local foliage and sell them to community members in December.

NEW YORK

South Jefferson FFA sells pastry puffs as a fundraiser. It's the only chapter in the state to do this.

NORTH DAKOTA

Turtle Lake Mercer FFA paints blue-and-gold turtle insignias with a business sponsor's name. This takes place along the town's main street during Turtle Days.

OHIO

Valley View MVCTC FFA hosts a schoolwide duck hunt to support the local food pantry. The officers hide ducks around the school, and students purchase duck licenses to "hunt" them.

OKLAHOMA

At each state convention, alumni members sponsor a silent auction featuring members' unique hand-made creations. The money raised goes toward the Future Ag-Ed Academy and provides scholarships for the children of agriculture instructors in the state.

OREGON

Baker FFA hosts a drive-thru BBQ fundraiser each spring and fall. Students deliver a tasty tri-tip dinner to eager FFA supporters.



PENNSYLVANIA

A county within the state hosts a farm-to-fork dinner and auction to raise funds, gain support and showcase student success from all three FFA chapters in the county.

RHODE ISLAND

During National FFA Week, chapters team up with Tractor Supply Company stores for a disaster-relief drive for families in Puerto Rico.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Ashley Ridge FFA hosts student-led goat's milk soap-making classes. Students milk the goats by hand at the school's on-campus farm.

SOUTH DAKOTA

How about a game of chicken bingo or cow patty bingo? Chapters sell bingo squares and then let a chicken loose on a board with corresponding bingo squares. Whoever has the square the chicken poops on receives half the proceeds.

TENNESSEE

Munford FFA hosts an annual Lamb Camp where children in surrounding areas are mentored by FFA members, learn about caring for animals and participate in character-building activities.

TEXAS

The Texas FFA Foundation hosted its first Growing Our Future Leadership Series and Gala on April 19. The classroom came alive as students heard from Red Steagall, Temple Grandin, Bob Tallman and more special guests.

UTAH

When tragedy struck, northern Utah FFA chapters hosted a Hypno Hick event, a comedy stage hypnotist, to raise money for a family in its tight-knit community.

VIRGINIA

In December, Turner Ashby Alumni FFA offers an annual farm toy show, complete with displays of "communities" and booths with toys for visitors to purchase to raise money for local members.

WASHINGTON

Throughout the year, Washington FFA members serve locally sourced meals, support the March of Dimes, and work the donut barn at the county fair to raise money for **THEIR CHAPTERS**.

WEST VIRGINIA

Each year, Buffalo FFA hosts an annual rodeo, called Bulls, Barrels and Buffalo FFA, to raise money for travel expenses to competitions at the state and national levels.

WYOMING

Wind River FFA runs a profitable taxidermy business out of its ag shop, making European mounts for local hunters. The process is extensive; the mounts soak in a vat of beetles and then a whitening solution. The chapter has also developed classes around perfecting the process.

WISCONSIN

Bay Port FFA hosted puppy yoga as a way to promote a healthier lifestyle for its members while raising funds for members to attend leadership conferences and conventions.



Dr. James WOODARD



“I’M SURE EVERY NATIONAL FFA ADVISOR HAS A GOAL OF VISITING EVERY STATE’S CONVENTION OR FFA CAMP. AGRICULTURE AND ITS STUDENTS ARE AS DIVERSE AS OUR NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY, AND I LOOK FORWARD TO UNDERSTANDING JUST HOW VARIED WE ARE.”

– DR. JAMES WOODARD

To many, assuming the role of National FFA Advisor would be the pinnacle of an agriculture educator’s career. For James Woodard, this new role is the ultimate chance to give back to those who helped him throughout his blue-and-gold journey.

Q: HOW DID YOU GET YOUR START IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION?

A: I began my agricultural education career in the seventh grade with Mr. Jerry Landmon in Georgia. Having grown up in poverty, my parents knew that education and work ethic were the keys to success in life. During my sophomore year, my agriculture teacher, Mr. Mike Tanner, helped me bring those skills to life. Because of his relentlessness to see me succeed, I later defined my mission in life to make a difference in the lives of students the same way he did in mine.

Q: WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO THE MOST IN YOUR NEW ROLE?

A: I’m sure every National FFA Advisor has a goal of visiting every state’s convention or FFA camp. Agriculture and its students are as diverse as our national geography, and I look forward to understanding just how varied we are.

Also, my daughter is a first-year agriculture teacher. I am especially excited that one of my first speaking engagements is during her chapter banquet. It is a full-circle moment for us all.

Q: WHEN YOU AREN’T WORKING IN THE CLASSROOM, WHAT DO YOU ENJOY?

A: For the past 17 years, I filled my spare time with my family in the show ring. My son and daughter are both grown now, but we have a long tradition in our home of showing cattle and sheep. In fact, our Christmas card every year is a reflection on the lessons we learned in the barn.

– By Bev Flatt



Ag Angle

ABIGAIL CRUIKSHANK

LOCATION: Pacific City, Ore.

FFA CHAPTER: Currently representing the Oregon FFA Association and Alumni of Bend FFA

INSTAGRAM: @abigailcruikshank

INSTAGRAM: @josiahcruik

FACEBOOK: Josiah Cruikshank

My sister took this photo five days after I was elected Oregon FFA State President. After welcome training, I felt overwhelmed by the year ahead. Instead of attending college, my five teammates and I would be representing FFA to supporters and developing leaders. When I feel inadequate, I reflect by experiencing nature. Driving home, I took a detour to the coast, and I was able to take in the vastness of the ocean. Just like the year ahead, I didn't know what was out there, but I was determined to keep a positive outlook through the adventure to come.

— Josiah Cruikshank

* **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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