

New VISIONS



The Official Newsletter of the National FFA Alumni Association

Volume 13, Issue 4 • December 2008

National FFA Alumni Convention: Celebrating the Present, Investing in the Future!

The more than 54,000 FFA members and guests who assembled in Indianapolis from October 22-25 for the National FFA Convention set the perfect stage for the 37th National FFA Alumni Convention. This culmination of a year's activities for Alumni members is held annually in conjunction with the National FFA Convention, which provides opportunities for Alumni and FFA members alike to establish common goals and share experiences. Energetic sessions, recognition of distinguished members and supporters, informative workshops, outstanding benefit auctions, and entertaining performances only begin to describe a memorable Alumni convention.

Series of Firsts

This year's convention offered a series of firsts: the National FFA Alumni Association raised nearly \$199,000 for scholarships, hosted a fun and engaging booth filled with displays and student competitions, and provided a live webcast that brought high impact workshops and Alumni sessions to everyone who was unable to attend the convention.

Benefit Auctions Set New Record

After a record-breaking year in 2007 for the benefit auctions, national leaders set a goal to raise \$160,000 in 2008. Proceeds go toward providing scholarships to FFA members to attend the Washington Leadership Conference and to collegiate students to study agricultural



Retiring National FFA Alumni President Ronnie Ansley holds a gift commemorating his service, a brick to be placed at the National FFA Center in Indianapolis.

NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
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education. Three benefit auctions were conducted this year: silent and live auctions held onsite and a timed auction on the Internet. More than 1,000 treasured items combined from the three auctions to raise \$198,978 (see page 4 for details).

Sessions, Workshops Online

Members and supporters can access taped sessions and workshops from the first ever webcast of the national convention by visiting www.ffa.org/alumni/. Lifetime Alumni member Brian Allmer, CO, provided the webcast with the technical assistance of Mark Jewell, Ag Job Network, and Warren E. Clark of CCI Marketing.

Keynote Says Others Can Make Difference

National FFA Alumni Convention attendees were treated to a keynote speech by Andrew McCrea, past national FFA officer, author, and host of the daily syndicated *American Countryside* radio broadcasts. In his message entitled "Making a Lasting Difference," McCrea offered three criteria that can be used to measure if something makes a lasting difference: is it special, reliable, and repeatable. McCrea prepared audience members to be more capable and ready to reach out and make a lasting difference in their own communities.

Leaders Elected, Business Conducted

The convention closed with its business session on October 24. The first highlight included officer elections. A ballot for the member-at-large position featured six outstanding candidates. Following six insightful campaign speeches, two members were elected to serve three-year terms: Anita Schneider of WaKeeney, KS, and Steve Olson of Buffalo, MN.

Convention story continued on page 8

Calendar 2009

Dates listed are when items must be postmarked to the National Office.

Check with your state leader(s) for individual state deadlines.

May 15

- Rosters and dues to qualify for awards and delegate counts
- Legion of Merit applications

June 1

- State Leaders Conference registration

July 1

- LPS Grant applications
- Outstanding/Pioneer Affiliate, Outstanding State Affiliate, Outstanding Achievement, National Distinguished Contributor, Website, and Newsletter applications, and Scrapbook
- Council nomination applications

July 15

- Auction donation forms for items to appear in catalog

July 14-18

- State Leaders Conference, Montrose, Colorado

October 21-23

- Alumni Silent Benefit Auction, Indianapolis, IN

October 22-23

- Alumni Convention, Indianapolis, IN

October 23

- Alumni Live Benefit Auction, Indianapolis, IN

Please visit the FFA Alumni website at www.ffa.org/alumni/ to download updated award applications. Send requests for forms to pmcdonald@ffa.org or phone 317-802-4332 to have forms mailed via the U.S. Postal Service.

ROUND TABLE

President Challenges Members to 'Bloom Where They are Planted'

Theme of "Say It, Do It, and Live It" Sets Pattern for Year

Every year our appreciation for the FFA as the greatest youth organization in the United



States continues to grow. As the greatest adult support group for FFA, the FFA Alumni provides the support necessary for FFA youth to enjoy endless leadership and networking opportunities. In short, we as Alumni "say it, do it, and live it!" As we con-

tinue to support and advocate for FFA, we must tell our story and promote our programs (**say it**), we must take action by stepping up and leading by example (**do it**), and we need to show our students, the community, and the nation the value and impact FFA Alumni offer (**live it**). I will admit that communicating our message can at times be difficult. The theme highlighted above can

help us focus our efforts. If we set and strive to achieve the goal of spreading the message of FFA and the FFA Alumni and work side-by-side to sustain agricultural education, we can make definite strides in the right direction.

All too often we think we have to do spectacular things in order to make a difference. Yet, if we remember that the sea is actually made up of individual drops of water and each drop matters, we can truly appreciate our own contributions and those of others—no matter how small they may seem. The key is finding out what we can do to serve the cause. Each one of

us can do something in our local community. My Mother regularly told me, "bloom where you are planted." FFA Alumni across this great nation are blooming and making huge impacts on FFA members and their communities.

In my annual travels, I witness a new freshman class "planting" themselves and beginning to learn about the opportunities in the food and fiber industry. They are realizing that whether they live in New York City or Cherryvale, KS, they can have an agricultural career. We can help those students realize their awesome potential! What an important role we have in nurturing FFA members to become lifelong leaders!

As Alumni, we *bloom* when we **say it**, and *bloom* when we **do it**, and *bloom* when we **live it**; we can make an impact on the FFA, the greatest youth organization in the United States. If we truly believe in the success and quality of these students and programs, it will show in our actions and become contagious. We can impact the lives of other people just by showing that we believe in ourselves, the programs, opportunities, and above all, the FFA members.

My Mother regularly told me, "bloom where you are planted." FFA Alumni across this great nation are blooming and making huge impacts on FFA members and their communities.

— Sam Atherton



Sam Atherton
National FFA Alumni President

Join the Movement: "Say It, Do It, and Live It"

FFA Alumni members,

I would like to hear how you say it, do it, and live it in your own FFA Alumni affiliates. If you helped an FFA member or FFA chapter, share your successes as FFA Alumni members so others may benefit from the success you have achieved. Please send your stories to me via e-mail to alumni@ffa.org.



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FFA Alumni *New Visions* is prepared and published quarterly by the National FFA Alumni Association as an affiliate of the Future Farmers of America in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education as a service to state and local agricultural education agencies.

Vision

The vision of the National FFA Alumni Association is a world where people and communities grow and develop to their fullest potential.

Mission

The mission of the National FFA Alumni Association is to secure the promise of FFA and agricultural education by creating an environment where people and communities can develop their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth, and career success.**

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Visit www.ffa.org/alumni for more Council information.

Ex-officio Members

National FFA Advisor, Dr. Larry Case

National FFA Alumni Executive Director,
J. Frank Saldaña

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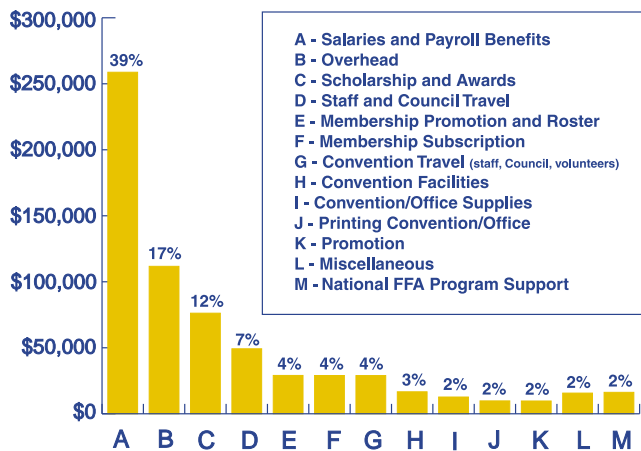


The 2008 National FFA Alumni Executive Committee based on convention elections (left to right): Diane Amera (President-Elect), Sam Atherton (President), and Ronnie Ansley (Past President).



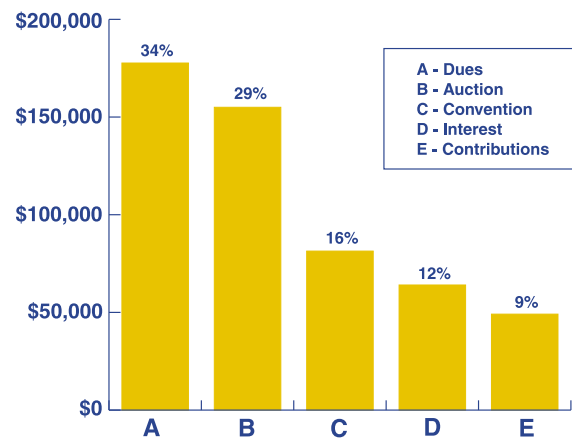
Where Do Your National Dues Go?

Expenses 2007-2008



Total Expense \$663,666

Revenue 2007-2008



Total Income \$527,187

Note: The 2007-2008 budget year ran a deficit by \$136,000 due to a shortfall in the association's investments. The investment interest earned only \$64,035 in 2007-2008 due to the meltdown in global credit and equity markets compared to the previous year 2006-2007 where the investment interest earned \$376,800. Like the rest of the nation, the association is finding new ways to save yet still provide great opportunities and programs.

Recruiting Alumni at Any Age

Recruiting FFA Members by Spreading the Word of How Alumni Serve

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader." These words from John Quincy Adams describe the traits that make FFA Alumni members leaders. He may not have been speaking directly to or about FFA Alumni, but these characteristics define what Alumni members do for FFA members across the nation.

The real question is how do we recruit new Alumni members? The key is to target individuals who want to feel connected to FFA but do not know how. High school seniors or college students may **not** know that they can continue their involvement with FFA through the FFA Alumni.



Nikki Savell
Alumni Intern

The FFA Alumni is an organization that allows me to continue my FFA experience and develop into a mentor that can provide opportunities and guidance for current FFA youth.

Recent high school graduates remember the excitement of winning a speaking event or receiving a scholarship. These people still have the fire and passion for FFA and would make perfect recruits. They have a strong desire to provide

someone else the same opportunities they were given. I encourage all Alumni to be more proactive in promoting our involvement in speaking events and sponsorship of scholarships.

Alumni members need to become more visible. A great way to do this is by showcasing the ways Alumni are supporting the local FFA chapter in displays at county fairs, homecoming events, FFA Week, and high school sporting events. Youth are more likely to join the FFA Alumni when they leave high school or college if they know and understand how valuable the program is and see the impact Alumni are having on their agricultural education program. Invite current members to your meetings and give a lifetime membership to graduating seniors.

My agricultural program did not have an FFA Alumni affiliate, so I learned about the Alumni through a series of fortunate events. My story is proof why it is important to promote the the benefits of Alumni membership to **all students**, but especially high school and collegiate students. Alumni inspire people to learn and provide great opportunities. FFA Alumni members, you are true leaders, and I thank you for being a mentor.

My story is proof why it is important to promote the the benefits of membership to all students.

— Nikki Savell

A Time to Give

Everyone Leaves a Legacy

Have you thought about your legacy lately? What do you want others to remember about your life? Most of us hope that our hard work and investments would ultimately make life easier for our families, first and foremost, and then the groups and organizations that we hold most dear. These people and organizations most clearly embody our values—the ideals and objectives for which we have striven and stood for all our lives.

Do you know that you can help your heirs and ensure the continuation of your legacy by giving to FFA? Carefully planned charitable gifts minimize the tax impact on your estate and maximize the assets that your family can keep. In the process, you can help guarantee that the FFA will continue to thrive and successfully meet the pressing needs of agricultural education. National FFA Foundation staff would like to help with your planning by sending you a copy of a free booklet *Ways to Give*. To request your copy, contact the National FFA Foundation office at **317-802-4297**, **bdonahue@ffa.org**, or visit the foundation website at **www.ffa.org** and click on the "Foundation" button in the navigational bar.

NATIONAL FFA FOUNDATION

Benefit Auctions Set New Records for Scholarships

You may have heard rumors of Superhero sightings at the national FFA and national FFA Alumni conventions held in October. More than 54,000 convention attendees were welcomed by Captain Alumni, Scholarship Supergirl, and Alumni Wonder Woman who encouraged them to become "Scholarship Superheroes" by participating in the National FFA Alumni Benefit Auctions. Before the auctions, members and supporters of the National FFA Alumni Association offered up unique and often priceless items to feature on the auction block. Nearly 800 people stepped forward and participated in the silent, live, and online auctions, joining forces to raise \$198,978 for student Washington Leadership Conference and collegiate scholarships!



In honor of their 60th anniversary of FFA sponsorship, both New Holland and Ford Trucks stepped up as scholarship superheroes by donating to the auction. With a winning bid of \$26,500, John Rose of TN found himself the proud owner of a new 2009 Ford F-150 SuperCrew XLT valued at \$32,000. New Holland celebrated in a big way by donating a T6050 Elite Tractor customized with the FFA emblem on the hood and window valued at over \$95,000. James Straeter of the New Holland Rochester, Inc. in IN, purchased the tractor. Additional auction items from New Holland included a tractor/baler



lease, a celebrity-autographed sub-compact tractor, and branded deluxe toolboxes. These donations combined generated more than \$78,000 for student scholarships.

A Special Thanks!

A special thanks is extended to all individuals and organizations—especially the National FFA Foundation, New Holland, Ford Trucks, Tractor Supply Company, United Country Auction Services, our dedicated volunteers, gracious donors, and the bidders—for making the auction a tremendous success!



Sponsors Add Excitement, Boost Auction Totals

The live benefit auction is an annual highlight for convention attendees. Once again United Country Auction Services conducted an energetic auction while simultaneously broadcasting the event over the Internet for supporters to bid on items and support the FFA.



State Basket Contest Results

Best Overall Basket—North Carolina FFA Alumni Association
(receives a \$550 Washington Leadership Conference scholarship)

President's Choice—New Mexico FFA Alumni Association
(receives a \$250-registration fee to the National FFA Alumni 2009 State Leaders Conference in Colorado)

People's Choice—Wisconsin FFA Alumni Association
(receives a \$250 Washington Leadership Conference scholarship)

2008 Silent, Live, and Online Benefit Auctions Memories

Superheroes Galore! (top right photo): Alumni Woman, Kristina Watson (left); Captain Alumni, Ryan Hassebrook (second right); and Supergirl, Nikki Savell (far right); posed for photos with FFA members while greeting convention attendees.

There's No Need to Fear (bottom left photo): A life-sized poster of National FFA Advisor Dr. Larry Case dressed as a cartoon superhero greeted convention attendees and reminded them of their mission to help raise funds for student scholarships.

Going Once (bottom middle photo). An FFA member from the Turner Ashby FFA Chapter in Virginia assists in displaying John Deere items during the FFA Alumni Live Benefit Auction.

Mystery Item (bottom right photo). FFA Alumni and FFA members bid on a mystery item in the silent benefit auction.



Awards Recap

Outstanding Affiliate Award Recipients

This award recognizes affiliates for their outstanding accomplishments in supporting and serving agricultural education and the FFA. These states set the standard for supporting FFA members in every program, service project, and workshop.

Gold

First Place—Suwannee FFA Alumni, Live Oak, FL
West Rowan FFA Alumni, Mt. Ulla, NC
Caledonia FFA Alumni, Caledonia, MI
Hiawatha FFA Alumni, Hiawatha, KS

Pioneer Affiliate Award Recipient

This award is designed to recognize newly chartered affiliates, which have been in existence three years or less, for their outstanding accomplishments in supporting and serving agricultural education and FFA.

Bronze

Hartsburg-Emden FFA Alumni, Hartsburg, IL

Outstanding State Association Recipients

This award is open to each state FFA Alumni association. Community involvement, recruiting tactics, organizational skills, and instructional activities for students are just a few of the factors considered when choosing recipients. These states set the standard for supporting FFA members!

Silver

Georgia FFA Alumni Association

Bronze

Wisconsin FFA Alumni Association

Outstanding Achievement Award Recipients

The Outstanding Achievement Award is the National FFA Alumni Association's highest award presented to an individual. The award is designed to recognize FFA Alumni members for outstanding service to agricultural education, the FFA, and the FFA Alumni. This very prestigious award is presented on a national level to no more than three people in a given year.

Darlene Arneson, Stoughton, WI

Cindy Ettestad, Mololla, OR

Dan Monson, Brodhead, WI



The Outstanding Achievement Award recipients from left to right: Darlene Arneson (WI), Cindy Ettestad (OR), and Dan Monson (WI).

Scrapbook Award Contest

This contest is designed to encourage affiliates to develop and record their historical background in a systematic, fun manner through the years.

Gold

First Place—Denmark FFA Alumni, Denmark, WI

Second Place—Cherryvale FFA Alumni, Cherryvale, KS

Membership Awards

Percent Membership Growth Award

First Place—Louisiana: 166%

Second Place—Nevada: 57%

Third Place—New York: 45%

Percent of FFA Membership Award

First Place—Rhode Island Alumni membership reaching 41% of FFA membership

Second Place—Connecticut Alumni membership reaching 32% of FFA membership

Second Place—Montana Alumni membership reaching 32% of FFA membership

State with Most Lifetime Members

First Place—Wisconsin

Second Place—Ohio

State with Most Alumni Members

First Place—Wisconsin

Second Place—Illinois

States with 100% State Officer Lifetime Membership

Arizona Mississippi

Arkansas Nebraska

Georgia Oklahoma

Illinois Oregon

Iowa Wisconsin

Kentucky

Annual Membership Star Awards

3 Star Plus Blazer (increase of 100 or more members)

Connecticut Nebraska

Illinois Ohio

Iowa Wisconsin

Minnesota

One Star

Louisiana

Montana

NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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For a complete listing of convention award recipients in each category, including the Legion of Merit Award, visit the National FFA Alumni website at www.ffa.org/alumni/.

2008 Local Program Support Grants

The Local Program Support Grant Program is sponsored by



The National FFA Alumni Association annually provides scholarships worth \$1,000 each to local FFA chapters and agricultural education programs. Grant recipients are selected from applicants who demonstrate a need to strengthen or enhance a local program.

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Project Name</u>
Northview High FFA	FL	Northview FFA Operation Bee Hive
Palatka High FFA	FL	Ag Farm Pig Parlor Re-Roof
Coral Reef High FFA	FL	Ag Experience Day
Green County High FFA	GA	We Want You!
Fannin County High FFA	GA	Livestock Barn Improvement
Toombs County High FFA	GA	Sound/PA Systems for New Ag Center
Banks County High FFA	GA	Livestock Trailer Refurbishing
Banks County Middle School FFA	GA	Animal Science Outdoor Lab
Cascade High FFA	IA	Cascade FFA Advancement in Technology
Okawville High FFA	IL	Improving Safety in the Okawwill High Ag Program
Eldorado High FFA	IL	Digital Presentation Projector
Marion High FFA	IL	Expansion of Landscape Facilities
Marion County High FFA	KY	Marion Co. Ag Dept. Technology Upgrade
Rockcastle County High FFA	KY	Rockcastle County Technology Enhancement
Homer High FFA	MI	Multimedia Projector
Dassel-Cokato High FFA	MN	Dassel-Cokato Greenhand Heifer Ring
Northeast Jones High	MS	Greenhouse Renovation
Hardin-Northern High FFA	OH	Ag Shop Transformation
Anthony Wayne High FFA	OH	Sound Amplification Made Easier
Sabin Schellenber Technical Center FFA	OR	Application of Life Science and Standards in Ag
Union High FFA	OR	Coats for Kids
Amity High FFA	OR	Member Computers
Woodburn High FFA	OR	Public Relations and Signage
Riverside High FFA	TN	FFA and FFA Alumni Newsletter
Burbank High FFA	TX	Swine Project Facility Renovation
Southside High FFA	TX	Southside FFA Community Garden
Randoloh High FFA	WI	Agriculture Spanning the Ages
Oconto Falls High FFA	WI	Operation Greenhouse
Denmark High and Middle FFA	WI	Animal SAE Improvements
Edgerton High FFA	WI	Classroom Computer

Visit the National FFA Alumni website at www.ffa.org/alumni/ to download an updated award application, which is due July 1, 2009.

Can Hunger—Million-Can Challenge! Convention Activities

The National FFA Alumni Association in partnership with Toyota hosts this two-year service learning project. The goal is to fight hunger across the nation and build relationships between FFA Alumni affiliates, FFA chapters, and Toyota dealerships.



Left photo: The Canstruction winning teams at the national FFA convention received Can Hunger—Million-Can Challenge! T-Shirts for their efforts in creating the winning entry to promote the national can drive.

Right photo: A Canstruction competition finished product at the national FFA convention by National FFA Alumni Council member Ryan Hassebrook (NE).

To help conduct a food drive in your community, the National FFA Alumni Association has created a how-to-guide. To obtain a copy of the guide, visit www.ffa.org/alumni/.

FFA Alumni Joins Campbell Soup Company to Support FFA

Barn Project Designed to Raise Awareness of Need for Supporting the Future of U.S. Agriculture

The Campbell Soup Company has partnered with the National FFA Organization and Grammy-nominee Jewel to raise awareness of the importance of supporting the future of U.S. agriculture. The “Help Grow Your Soup” campaign seeks to raise a quarter of a million dollars to champion FFA educational efforts that encourage youth to embrace agriculture so they can continue growing the quality ingredients that go into our food.

Campaign Makes National Debut

In late September, representatives of the National FFA Organization joined Jewel and members of the Campbell’s team in New York City for a media tour to launch the campaign. National officer Tyler Tenbarge and two mem-

bers from the John Bowne High School FFA chapter in Flushing, NY, were participants in a taping of *The Martha Stewart Show*. The John Bowne students presented Martha with an honorary National FFA Alumni membership and a basket of homegrown vegetables, including butternut squash used in a recipe she cooked with singer/songwriter Jewel on the episode. Jewel, who was also presented with a National FFA Alumni membership, says growing up on farmland helped her appreciate the important role farming plays in ensuring families have quality food on their tables.

Main Purpose to Raise Funds

The campaign consists of several initiatives: a fundraising element and a barn restoration project. The main initiative involves a special website www.helpgrowyoursoup.com. For each click on the site’s red barn icon by visitors (including Alumni), Campbell will donate \$1 to the FFA (up to \$250,000). Funds support FFA educational efforts and preserve several barns across the nation.

Barn Project Promotes Agriculture

The other campaign initiative offers an exciting opportunity for FFA Alumni members. The website listed above features photos of barn restoration projects

across the country. This initiative was created and is being implemented with the help of the staff at the National FFA Alumni Association. Alumni affiliates and FFA chapters are working to preserve or restore five barns, with one already completed in Reddick, IL.

The Riordan family provided the perfect barn to be revived by four area chapters and the Illinois FFA Alumni Association. Jim McCray, Illinois FFA Alumni vice president, was the contractor on site, directing students to remove and replace boards, build new doors, and replace windows. Another 70 students and Alumni cleaned, painted, and landscaped the site. After two days, this hardworking crew made a lasting impression on all the participants and the sponsor Campbell Soup Company.

The FFA Alumni has selected four other barns to revive by May 2009. Each of these barn restorations will enable farming families to update and revive their planting and harvesting processes, while also providing an educational opportunity for FFA members who are primarily high school students.

Applications will be available February 2009 for the next five barn restorations on www.ffa.org/alumni/.

To learn more about the project or to follow the progress of each barn, visit www.helpgrowyoursoup.com.



Illinois FFA Alumni members and National FFA Alumni staff proudly stand before the restored barn located near Reddick, IL.



“News You Can Use” is a column designed to keep Alumni members and volunteers informed of valuable and timely information.

National FFA Week Outreach

National FFA Week provides an ideal venue for FFA Alumni to cooperate with their local FFA chapters in conducting activities (radio spots, honorary breakfasts, etc.) that promote their programs to the local community and school administrators. National FFA Week is February 21-28, 2009. The celebration runs from Saturday to Saturday, and the dates encompass February 22—George Washington’s birthday. Planning materials are available at www.ffa.org/index.cfm?method=c_programs.FFAWeek. A flyer sent to all chapters featured FFA Week banquet supplies along with a host of new products!

National Ag Day, Week Preparation

The time is now for Alumni to begin planning with their local FFA chapters to celebrate National Ag Day (March 20, 2009) and National Ag Week (March 15-21, 2009). National Agriculture Day occurs annually on the first day of Spring and provides FFA chapters and Alumni affiliates an opportunity to honor those who work in agriculture and promote their local programs. A planning guide is available at www.agday.org and it provides tools and ideas to help you plan successful events in honor of National Ag Day.

FFA Scholarships

The National FFA Organization annually awards about \$2 million in scholarships for a wide variety of career goals and higher education plans. Scholarships are sponsored by numerous businesses through the National FFA Foundation. Alumni members can encourage graduating FFA members to complete an application, which must be submitted online. A completed signature page postmarked no later than February 17, 2009, is required in order to be eligible. For more details, visit www.ffa.org/index.cfm?method=c_programs.Scholarships.

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New Alumni Awards

Active Alumni affiliates are eligible and are recognized in several award areas at the National FFA Alumni Convention. Award postmark mailing dates and details can be found at www.ffa.org/alumni/ (see also pages 1 and 5 for deadlines and abbreviated descriptions). The national association announces two new award programs:

#1—Website Award Competition

All nationally chartered, active local affiliates and state Alumni associations are eligible to enter this contest. Local affiliates will be judged in one division and state associations in another. Websites will be judged on ease of navigation, quality, and currency of information, technical merit, originality, usefulness, and design optimization. The website must be complete and accessible at the submission deadline. There will be one winner per National FFA Alumni region and an overall national winner for the two divisions.

#2—Newsletter Award Competition

All nationally chartered, active local affiliates and state Alumni associations are eligible to enter this contest. To enter the contest, an affiliate or state association must provide two issues of its newsletter or e-newsletter distributed within the past two calendared years. The issues must clearly indicate which group is being represented and must be composed primarily of original, club-generated material of educational value. Printed and electronic newsletters will be judged separately. The newsletters will be judged on content, readability, and layout and presentation. Awards will be presented to a winner in each of the National FFA Alumni regions for local affiliates and for state associations entering the competition and an overall national winner named in each division (local affiliate and state association).

For other valuable and timely updates and information, monitor the National FFA Alumni website at www.ffa.org/alumni/. Scroll down to the "Update" section.

Convention story continued from page 1

Three capable hopefuls vied for the president-elect position. After two rounds of voting, Diane Amera of Stoughton, WI, was elected to serve in that capacity. (For current Council contact information, visit www.ffa.org/alumni/.)

As the elections closed, 2007-2008 President Ronnie Ansley of NC delivered his retiring address. He challenged members to expand their perspectives by choosing to tackle obstacles and turn them into opportunities for themselves and for the students they serve.

The 2008-2009 President Sam Atherton of KS followed with his remarks. Sam challenged FFA Alumni members with his new theme for the year, which stresses learning and helping others "to say it, do it, and live it" (see page 2 for theme explanation). He stressed how communication is the key this next year as FFA Alumni members find new ways to step up and spread the word of the importance of FFA.



Council member Kristina Watson (L) presents Ken Seering (R) of Denmark, WI, with an Alumni blazer marking his 35th year in receiving the Legion of Merit Award for recruiting 15 or more members per year.