

New VISIONS



The Official Newsletter of the National FFA Alumni Association

Volume 14, Issue 4 • Winter 2009

National Convention Sets Stage for Future Growth



By Dustin Petty

Dustin Petty is a member of the Michigan FFA Alumni Council and served in the 2009 National FFA Convention newsroom. As an Agriculture and Natural Resources Communication major at Michigan State University, he was the public relations coordinator and managing editor of the Michigan FFA Association insert. This upcoming year Dustin will serve with AmeriCorps in Chicago, developing after-school programs and tutoring for homeless students.

With almost four decades behind it, National FFA Alumni Association leaders and members are looking toward the future. At the 2009 National FFA Alumni Convention, held October 22-23 in Indianapolis, Ind., hundreds of Alumni members from nearly every state and Puerto Rico gathered to work toward their common goal of supporting the 500,000-plus FFA members under the theme “Say It. Do It. Live It!”

“The convention was a complete success,” said Diane Amera, the newly installed National FFA Alumni Association president. “We have provided opportunities for networking; anytime we can bring people together is a definite plus.”

The focus at convention’s end was on the hard work and dedication for the group’s main goal: to see FFA members prosper. “The future is very bright for the FFA Alumni,” said Sam Atherton, retiring association president. “We have ... a new council president who is committed to working hard with the new FFA Alumni Council and our task force is energized and committed to growing the Alumni.”

Business Session Elects Leaders, Encourages Support for Minted Coin

At the business session, the delegates elected David Miller of Maryland as the President-Elect. Jim McCray of Illinois is the Eastern Region



Delegates from Maryland and Michigan listen intently to speakers during the business session.

Representative, Johnny Jones of Georgia is the Southern Region Representative, and Dan Classen of Iowa is completing the remaining year as Central Region Representative. Awards were presented to outstanding affiliates and members based on their achievements and success (see page 5).

Delegates also learned about an effort to seek an official United States minted commemorative coin in honor of the FFA organization’s 85th anniversary in 2012. Two bills—Senate Bill 1553 and House Bill 3464—have been introduced to Congress and are in need of more cosigners. Alumni members were encouraged to contact their senators and representatives, urging them to support the measures (see <http://capwiz.com/naae/home>).

Benefit Auctions Raise Funds for FFA

Supporting FFA members was central to the annual silent benefit auction, where 1,000 items were available for bidding. Items were donated by Alumni members, with \$146,000 eventually being raised for scholarships for FFA members. (See page 3 for more details.)

Fun Room Adds Excitement

The newest feature to the convention was the fun room that at times could be found full of attendees dancing along to Beyonce’s hit “Single Ladies” or high school students playing sack toss, while learning about the Alumni association and its benefits.

“It [the room] is a way for Alumni to take a break and have fun,” said David Miller, a Maryland FFA Alumni member. “Parents and FFA members can visit to see what the Alumni has to offer and why they should become members.”

Convention continued on page 2

Calendar 2010

Important Dates to Remember

Dates listed are when items must be postmarked to the national office. Check with your state leader(s) for individual state deadlines.

May 15

- Turn in 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
- Affiliate, Outstanding State Affiliate, Outstanding Achievement, National Distinguished Contributor, Website, and Newsletter applications, and Scrapbooks
- Council nomination applications

July 15

- Auction donation forms for items to appear in catalog

July 14-18

- State Leaders Conference in Illinois

October 20-22

- Alumni Silent Benefit Auction, Indianapolis, Ind.
- Alumni Convention, Indianapolis, Ind.

October 22

- Alumni Live Benefit Auction, Indianapolis, Ind.

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

YOU Make It Happen!

The success of the FFA Alumni begins with you!

We're all striving to achieve a successful Alumni organization. It's important to remember, it is up to you to make success happen. The journey begins when you make the decision to be part of the team. You are critical to the success of our association.



Diane Amara

Saying Yes!

When you say that three letter word "yes," and accept the role of leadership in your affiliate, your role begins. You don't need

to be an officer, a committee chairperson, or an event coordinator to be a leader. You naturally assume a leadership role in your affiliate by contributing your time and talents.

Seize the Opportunity!

When your eyes are open and you take a look around, opportunity abounds. You realize it is important to ensure opportunities for our youth in agricultural education and FFA. By seizing the opportunity as an FFA Alumni member, you're making an impact in the lives of students.

Understand Your Role!

It is up to you to understand the importance of your involvement and to embrace the

opportunities that open the doors to your affiliate. Respecting differences and understanding the importance of engaging people outside our normal circle of friends will strengthen our organization. Only you can make the decision to encourage and accept involvement from everyone in your community. It isn't about you, it is up to you.

You can make it happen by communicating with your local officers, with your state leaders, and with your national council. I urge you to realize the opportunities and understand that ultimately it is up to YOU to say yes and make it happen. The success of the team will depend on you and your willingness to contribute. I expect you to take the lead to ask questions and communicate with your leadership.

Only you can decide to take advantage of the opportunities and understand what the FFA Alumni Association is all about. Every one of us working alongside each other can make a difference in the lives of the students who live there. You are the leaders who will grow our association and enrich our communities through agricultural education and FFA. It's up to YOU to make it happen!

Diane Amara
National FFA Alumni President

Convention continued from page 1

Programs Build Unity, Communities

The National FFA Alumni works at strengthening members for more than just two days out of the year. Two programs in particular, both featured in the fun room during convention, help members and Alumni affiliates work together to build their communities.

Partnering with Campbell Soup Company, the National FFA Alumni Association is conducting the "Help Grow Your Soup" campaign. Essentially, web users can vote through January 5, 2010, for a barn of their

choice at www.HelpGrowYourSoup.com that will be renovated by FFA and Alumni members. The process has already raised \$250,000 for FFA projects. This program supports production agriculture and teaching facilities.

Another activity, Harvest for America, brings Alumni together with Tractor Supply Company and Carhartt (for more details see www.tractorsupply.com/HarvestForAmerica). Through the support of these groups, FFA members collect non-perishable food that stays in the community, helping those who most need it.



The Official Newsletter of the National FFA Alumni Association

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Visit www.ffa.org/alumni for more National FFA Alumni Association information.

Visit <http://ffaalumni.wordpress.com/> for the National FFA Alumni Association weblog.

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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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Benefit Auctions Raise Funds for Student Scholarships

By Dustin Petty (biography on page 1)

If you felt the need to purchase some cheese during the 82nd National FFA Convention—or perhaps a tool box, some doggie treats, or a set of tires for the truck—you did not have to head to the nearest mega-mart. All you needed to do was visit the National FFA Alumni Benefit Auctions.

Starting on Wednesday, October 21, a thousand items were available for bidding at the silent auction. The items ranged from kitchen goods to automotive accessories and were donated to the auction by generous businesses, FFA chapters, and Alumni members from across the nation. Billed as “Mission: Possible!” the auctions raised money to help support FFA members attending the Washington Leadership Conference (WLC).

As part of the auction, each state FFA and FFA Alumni association was invited to participate in the State Basket Contest. Each of the 18 participating associations produced a unique and creative basket that represented FFA, FFA Alumni, agriculture, and its state. Baskets were judged by a committee, which selected the Alabama FFA Alumni basket as Best Overall and which sold at the live auction. The association received a \$550 WLC scholarship for its efforts. The Kansas FFA Alumni Association earned the President’s Choice and received a \$200 scholarship to send an attendee to the 2010 National FFA Alumni State Leaders Conference. The North Carolina FFA Alumni won the People’s Choice category and received a \$250 WLC scholarship to award to a state member.

A live auction also took place on Friday evening, October 23, and was conducted by United Country Auction Services. The hot items of the night included a 2010 Ford F-150 XLT, selling for \$26,500, and a New Holland Boomer 8N. Other popular items included an original New Farmers of America emblem jacket patch, tickets to the 2010 Rose Bowl Parade to watch the first-ever FFA/RFD-TV float, and 12 limited-edition FFA mailboxes custom painted in national blue by Valspar. The auctions concluded Friday evening, raising more than \$146,000.

Alumni volunteers from across the United States were available to assist potential bidders. One such member, Mary Lou Ladner from Carthage, Miss., has been attending national FFA conventions since the 1980s and offering her help for almost as long.

“There is no other place I’d rather be,” said Ladner. “I greet people

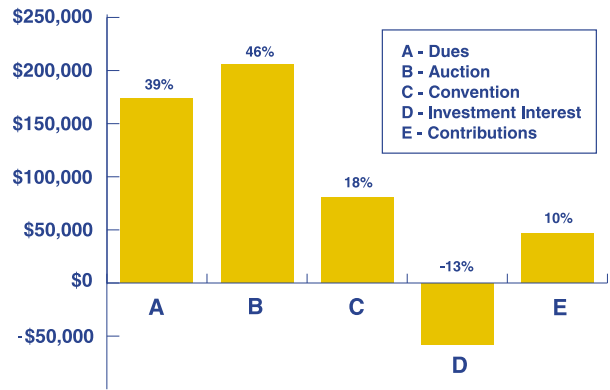


Top left: Convention attendee reviews live auction listing. **Top Right:** One of the hot items of auction night was the 2010 Ford F-150 XLT, which sold for \$26,500.



Where Do Your National Dues and Funds Go?

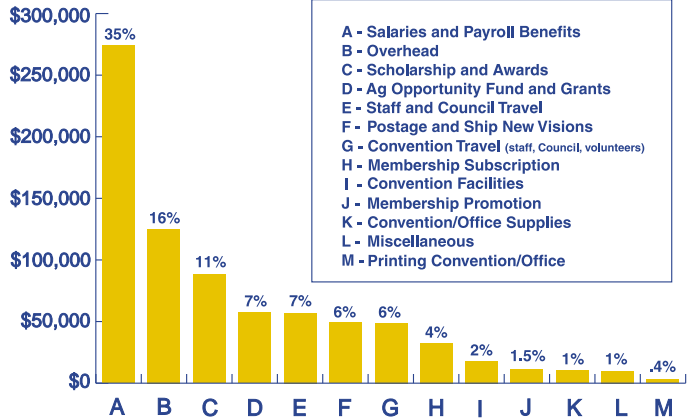
Revenue 2008-2009



Total Income \$448,949

The total loss of \$247,953 in Real Gain and Unrealized Gain from the association’s Investment caused it to have fewer funds with which to work.

Expenses 2008-2009



Total Expenses \$784,335

at the door of the auction and see Alumni coming in from every corner of the map. It is like a family reunion to see these people with the same goals of supporting FFA members.”

Gary Kendrick of Pell City, Ala., and president of the state’s Alumni association, is one of those supporting FFA members. “The money raised here will advance the education of our members,” said Kendrick.



Above: More than 1,000 items enticed bidders during the silent benefit auction.

2009 Local Program Support Grant Recipients

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</u>
Baldwin-Woodville High	Wisconsin	Adventures In Agriculture
Buddy Taylor Middle	Florida	Displaying Excellence
Dassel Cokato High	Minnesota	Enhance our Curriculum to Beautify our Camp
Geraldine High	Alabama	Promoting Going Green and Tree Identification
Glen Rose High	Texas	Glen Rose FFA Alumni Concession Stand
Hinson Middle	Florida	Mangrove Nursery and Plant Propagation Project
Homer High	Michigan	Technology Upgrade for the Agriscience and FFA Department
Meridian/Mountain View/Rocky Mountain High	Idaho	Sound System for FFA Alumni Auction
Mishicot High	Wisconsin	What's Really in Our Food
Molalla River High	Oregon	Molalla Land Lab Facility Upgrade
Moorefield High	West Virginia	Moorefield High School FFA Jump Start
Northview High	Florida	Hydro-Ponos—Water Labor
Pierce County High	Georgia	The Jimmy Mock Livestock Arena Renovation
Puckett Attendance Center	Mississippi	Building for the Future
Rice Lake High	Wisconsin	Cooperative Milk Machine Project
Salem High	Illinois	Egg Incubator
Sauk Prairie High	Wisconsin	Bringing the Farm Indoors
Sonorville High	Georgia	The Sonorville Phoenix Flight Plan to Lead Out Loud
South Rowan High	North Carolina	“Weighing” Out Animal Science Opportunities
Yelm High	Washington	Yelm: Built FFA Tough

Grants Offer Assistance in Difficult Economy

Judge offers insight on successful applications

By Dustin Petty (biography on page 1)

In times of economic uncertainty, agriscience programs and FFA chapters are facing cuts that might hinder their goals and efforts.

But with the aid of the National FFA Alumni Association, in partnership with Tractor Supply Company, 20 FFA chapters were given a financial injection, each receiving a grant for \$1,000.

For nearly 10 years, Local Program Support grants have been available to FFA chapters that wanted to add or improve a chapter or program component. To qualify, a chapter must have an active Alumni affiliate that has paid its dues.

Lora Finch, an agriscience instructor and FFA advisor in Homer, Mich., was the recipient of one of the grants awarded in 2009.

She is using the money to invest in an Elmo machine, which is similar to an overhead projector and allows anything that is placed on it—a corn stalk, book, etc.—to be projected onto a screen.

“This was my second time applying,” said Finch. “The grant program was really promoted at an agriculture teachers’ conference that I attended. It turned out to be a great opportunity for me to adopt a new technology that will improve the learning capacity of my students. I will have more options with my lesson plans, and it will give me more time to teach.”

Most often, the grant money is a portion of what the chapters will need to launch their respective projects. The local Alumni affiliate helps to raise the remaining funds, said Kevin Keith, a Local Program Success specialist for the northeast United States. He has served on the committee that awards the grants.

“This year there were about 40 applicants,” said Keith. “We wish there were more.”

When reviewing the applications, Keith said he searches for chapters that will “get the biggest bang for the buck.”

“The grant should really make a big difference and start a chapter or program down the road to a new era in agriculture,” he added. “The grants should inspire chapters to try something innovative, creative.”

Many chapters apply more than once. Keith gives “bonus points” when he sees a new applicant. He also adds that the grant should not be used to replace program funding that had been cut.

According to Keith, the National FFA Alumni Association will attempt to award thirty \$1,000 grants in coming years, increasing the number of recipients and the potential for growth among FFA chapters across the nation.

The grants should inspire chapters to try something innovative, creative.

— Kevin Keith

The deadline for the Local Support Program Grant Program is July 1, 2010. The application can be downloaded from the National FFA Alumni website at www.ffa.org/alumni.



Outstanding Affiliate Award Recipients

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

Gold

1st Place—Denmark FFA Alumni, Denmark, Wis.

2nd Place—Bushnell-Prairie City Alumni, Bushnell, Ill.

3rd Place—Suwannee FFA Alumni, Live Oak, Fla.

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

Midland FFA Alumni, Wyoming, Iowa

Outstanding State FFA Alumni 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 factors considered when choosing recipients. These states set the standard for supporting FFA members!

Silver

Georgia FFA Alumni Association

Illinois FFA Alumni Association

Outstanding Achievement Award Recipients

This award is the association's highest award presented to an individual. The award is designed to recognize FFA Alumni members for outstanding service to agricultural education, 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.

Marilyn Mason, Whitehouse, Ohio

Jerry Maurer, Madison, Wis.

Eric Trembl, Denmark, Wis.

Newsletter Award Contest (new category)

This contest is open to local affiliates and state associations. Print and electronic newsletters are judged separately based on content, readability, and layout/presentation.

Gold

1st Place—Ohio FFA Alumni Association, Archbold, Ohio

2nd Place—Anthony Wayne FFA Alumni, Whitehouse, Ohio

Silver

Marshall FFA Alumni, Marshall, Mich.

Website Award Contest (new category)

This contest is open to local affiliates and state associations. Websites are judged on ease of navigation, quality, currency of information, technical merit, originality, usefulness, and design optimization.

Gold

Georgia FFA Alumni Association, Athens, Ga.

Silver

Ohio FFA Alumni Association, Archbold, Ohio

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

1st Place—Cherryvale FFA Alumni, Cherryvale, Kan.

2nd Place—Denmark FFA Alumni, Denmark, Wis.

3rd Place—Milton FFA Alumni, Milton, Wis.

Membership Awards

Percent Membership Growth Award

1st Place—Alabama: 300 percent increase

2nd Place—California: 77 percent increase

3rd Place—West Virginia: 49 percent increase

Percent of FFA Membership Award

1st Place—Rhode Island Alumni reaching 50 percent of FFA membership

2nd Place—Wisconsin Alumni reaching 47 percent of FFA membership

3rd Place—Oregon Alumni reaching 35 percent of FFA membership

State with Most Lifetime Members

1st Place—Wisconsin

2nd Place—Ohio

State with Most Alumni Members

1st Place—Wisconsin

2nd Place—Illinois

States with 100 percent State Officer

Lifetime Membership

Arkansas Nebraska

Georgia Oregon

Illinois Tennessee

Kentucky Virginia

Mississippi Wisconsin

American FFA Degree College Scholarship Drawing

FFA members who will be receiving their American Degrees at the National FFA Convention and are National FFA Alumni members are eligible to participate in a \$1000 college scholarship drawing. All FFA members selected to receive the American Degree Award will receive by mail an official entry form prior to the National FFA Convention. To qualify for the drawing, FFA members must be current members of the National FFA Alumni Association (will be verified) and prepay their national dues by October 1 of the calendar year. Winner must provide proof of enrollment at a post-secondary education institute. The entry form must be returned to the National FFA Alumni Association, postmarked no later than October 1. **The recipient of the 2009 American Degree Scholarship is Marie Mahaney of Brodhead, Wis.**

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.

FFA News

National FFA Week Outreach



National FFA Week offers local affiliates the ideal venue to cooperate with their local FFA chapters in conducting activities (radio spots, recognition breakfasts, recruitment programs, etc.) that promote their programs to community leaders and school administrators. **National FFA Week runs Saturday to Saturday, February 20-27, 2010**, and encompasses George Washington's birthday (February 22). Planning materials are available at www.ffa.org/index.cfm?method=c_programs.FFAWeek.

FFA Scholarships

The National FFA Organization annually awards about \$2 million in scholarships for a variety of career goals and higher education plans (about one in every five students who applies is awarded a scholarship). Alumni members can encourage graduating seniors to complete applications, which must be submitted electronically **no later than 5 p.m. (EST) on February 15, 2010**. A signature page must be **postmarked by February 22, 2010**. For more details, visit www.ffa.org/documents/sch_poster.pdf or www.ffa.org/index.cfm?method=c_programs.Scholarships.

WLC Scholarships

The 2010 National FFA Alumni Washington Leadership Conference (WLC) scholarships will be mailed to local and state FFA Alumni associations in January. This year the association is presenting 115 WLC scholarships to FFA members based on local and state Alumni membership totals from the previous membership year. To view the scholarships received by your state and the state contact to whom the scholarships were sent, visit www.ffa.org/alumni. Encourage FFA members in your state to apply for these scholar-

ships and contact state FFA Alumni leaders for application procedures and deadlines.

Enter your Chapter Tees

Encourage your FFA chapter to enter the 2010-2011 Chapter T-shirt Design Contest. For more details, visit www.ffa.org/documents/2010-2011contestrules.pdf. Submission **deadline is March 1, 2010**.

Risk Management Essay Contest

Production agriculture is a high risk undertaking. Students who participate in the Risk Management Essay Contest will develop an understanding of the principles of risk management and learn how to select the proper strategies to minimize risk and maximize returns. Ten national winning essays will be selected on the basis of content, adherence to the assigned topic, grammar, organization, originality, and creativity. All essay entries are due to National FFA on **February 1, 2010**. Encourage your FFA chapter to enter. For more details, visit www.ffa.org/index.cfm?method=c_programs.RiskManagement.

Fundraising News

Mini-grants for Collegiate FFA



The CHS Foundation, the major giving entity of CHS, Inc., a diversified energy, grains, and foods company, has launched a college club mini-grants program to strengthen learning experiences and professional development opportunities for agriculture-related college clubs such as collegiate FFA chapters. Through the program, the CHS Foundation will provide individual grants up to \$1,000 to innovative leadership and professional development programs with an agricultural focus. Examples include leadership training opportunities, mentorship programs, professional development

experiences, and student fundraising efforts. Grants will be awarded on an ongoing basis. Alumni can encourage their college bound members who belong to a collegiate FFA chapter or an agriculturally-related club to apply for these grants. For more information, visit www.chsfoundation.org/scholarshipprog.html#minigrants.

Teaching Profession News

National Teach Ag Campaign



The National Council for Agricultural Education, with NAAE as the lead organization, has launched a National Teach Ag (NTA) Campaign to encourage students to consider agricultural education as a profession. The first annual NTA day will be held February 25, 2010. Alumni and their local agriculture instructor(s) can begin planning now to hold a series of activities to promote agricultural education as a profession. For more information and planning resources (brochures, banners, and merchandise), visit www.naae.org/teachag/#why.

Agriculture News

National Ag Day, Week Preparation

Alumni and FFA members can begin planning now to celebrate National Ag Day (March 20, 2010) and National Ag Week (March 14-20, 2010). The commemoration occurs annually and offers Alumni and FFA members an opportunity to honor those who work in agriculture (the food and fiber industry) and promote their local programs. A planning guide will soon be available at www.agday.org. The website provides tools (resources, media materials, and many other items) and ideas to help you plan successful events in honor of National Ag Day.

For other valuable and timely updates and information, monitor the National FFA Alumni Association website at www.ffa.org/alumni. Click on the “Awards and Grants” section.

To remain up-to-date on key Alumni activities between issues, remember to visit the National FFA Alumni Association webblog at <http://ffaalumni.wordpress.com>.

Oregon Teacher Taps Alumni for Event Prep

Four career development event teams from the North Clackamas, Ore., Agricultural Science and Technology (AST) program competed at the 2009 national convention: parliamentary procedure, poultry judging, agricultural communications, and agricultural sales. The agricultural sales team earned fourth place and a female member placed first overall. The agricultural communications team, coached by a local FFA Alumni member, placed 11th in national competition.

Agriculture instructor Kathy Mayfield credits assistance of local Alumni members prior to competition with providing her students with an edge (see sidebar for a program snapshot). The following interview offers a glimpse of this successful partnership.

Q: How have Alumni members used their skills to prepare teams for national and other levels of competition?

A: In the area of agricultural sales, Alumni members from neighboring affiliates help train team members (both beginning and advanced levels). Practices consist of FFA members rotating between panels of 5-10 Alumni members and giving their sales presentations multiple times, and practicing their practicum areas (customer relations, telephone sales, etc.).

At a leadership day practice that we host for our entire district, Alumni members from our and neighboring affiliates help students practice their speeches (those for the Creed, beginning, sophomore, extemporaneous, and prepared public speaking events). This event has proven to be very successful for our chapter. We have had students participate in every speaking division at the sub-state or state level for the last two years (either in the top four or eight in state competition).



Q: How specifically do Alumni help you accomplish your goals regarding FFA competition and also on a larger scale within the chapter and program?

A: Alumni members spend hours individually with FFA members helping them perfect their skills. They provide them real-life practice experiences, which builds their confidence. Alumni develop genuine relationships with FFA members, which I think is most effective in building their confidence.

On a larger scale, I try to communicate directly with the local affiliate about the needs of the program. I inform the Alumni about what I want and need from them when they work with students. The chapter invites Alumni to join in the celebration of the students' success.

Q: How do Alumni members help supplement your strengths as an advisor/instructor?

A: Alumni members help by completing paperwork, hosting chapter officer work days (providing food), and chaperoning at our county fair. The honest challenge for me as an advisor is deciding what I am willing to surrender and hand over to others. Once I can find someone with certain strengths, I try to utilize him or her to connect with other Alumni to involve more of them in the program.

Q: Why do you believe it is important to have Alumni support?

A: In today's society, youth need to know that adults value them. Many of the urban students in our program need additional support. Those students are able to develop healthy relationships with Alumni whose support creates more opportunities for students than what I offer on my own. Alumni support also shows administration and school boards



Left: North Clackamas, Ore., students display their confidence before national competition. **Right:** Alumni member assists FFA members in preparing for competition.

that the community values the agricultural education program.

Q: What advice do you have for other teachers interested in using their Alumni more actively in their programs?

A: There are a lot of good people who are waiting to be asked to help. Find one area in which you need help. Encourage Alumni to be successful in addressing that need by being supportive of their efforts. Show your appreciation for their support.

For more information, contact Kathy Mayfield at mayfieldk@nclack.k12.or.us.

North Clackamas Snapshot

- Fourteen-acre school farm in urban area, providing a teaching laboratory, work placement, and housing for 90 percent of student entrepreneurship and research projects; 95 percent of students have identified supervised agricultural experience programs
- Animal science-focused curriculum: small animal science, equine and veterinary sciences, large animal science, and advanced agricultural research
- One hundred seventy five urban students enrolled in double block classes every other day that combine academic instruction and land laboratory lessons; includes science credit, project based learning units, and an articulation agreement to enable students to earn up to 14 college credits
- FFA chapter maintains 100 percent FFA membership; two noteworthy activities include a large agriculture literary project and a plant sale that annually generates \$15,000; chapter has received a National FFA Alumni Local Program Support grant for the last five years
- FFA Alumni affiliate is comprised of 20 active members; main activities include a summer luau, Bunco night, Christmas tree fundraiser, and assistance with state and national convention

The National FFA Alumni Association newsletter *New Visions* is offered as an e-newsletter. If you would prefer to receive it electronically, submit your e-mail address to alumni@ffa.org and include "New Visions e-Newsletter" in the subject line.

Post-Convention Edition

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Keep Your Operation Ahead of the Game in the New Century!

The New Century Farmer program teaches college students or recent graduates what they need to know about how to run a successful production agriculture operation in the 21st century. They will work with top U.S. industry leaders and agriculturalists on topics including current trends, technologies, risk management, and farm succession. The program prepares them to develop a network of peers and mentors from the agricultural industry with whom they can continue a lifetime of professional growth and development.

Alumni are encouraged to support the future of production agriculture by informing local students and encouraging them to apply. Applications are **due March 15, 2010**; more program details are available at www.ffa.org/ncfarmer. Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be enrolled in a vocational school, university, or college or a recent graduate.
- Have a background in production agriculture.
- Have the intention of returning to production agriculture as a career after the completion of their schooling.



Selected participants will attend a five-day, all-expense paid conference July 19-23, 2010, at the Pioneer International, Inc., campus in Johnston, Iowa.

The New Century Farmer program is sponsored by Pioneer—A Dupont Company, Rabo AgriFinance, and CASE IH, with media partner *Successful Farming*, as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.



A column designed to provide useful ideas, tips, and advice to build strong Alumni affiliates that support agricultural education programs and FFA chapters.

Tennessee: Food Bank Fundraisers



Drew Scott and Jake Lay were presented a customized FFA Corn Hole Set for their win in the tournament.

The Riverside, Tenn., FFA Chapter and Alumni affiliate are participating in the Harvest for America Program (see page 2 for details). The chapter hosted a Corn Hole Tournament, also known as sack toss, to raise support for the

Decatur County Food Bank. Seventeen teams competed in the tournament, which raised 215 pounds of food for the local center. Two Alumni members helped raise funds for the Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee by selling towels before a Tennessee/Georgia football game. For information, contact the Riverside High School Agricultural Education Department, 731-852-3941.

Affiliate Incentive Program Drawing

An incentive for local agriculture instructors to charter new or re-activate existing affiliates is provided annually by the National FFA Alumni Association. Instructors who charter with the national association for the current membership year (roster/charter documents submitted by May 15) are entered into a \$1,000 drawing. The instructor whose name is drawn will receive \$500 and his or her corresponding Alumni affiliate will receive \$500. All affiliates that meet the criteria will be entered into the drawing. **The winners of this year's drawing were instructor Brandon Cobble and the Meigs FFA Alumni affiliate from Meigs High School in Decatur, Tenn.**