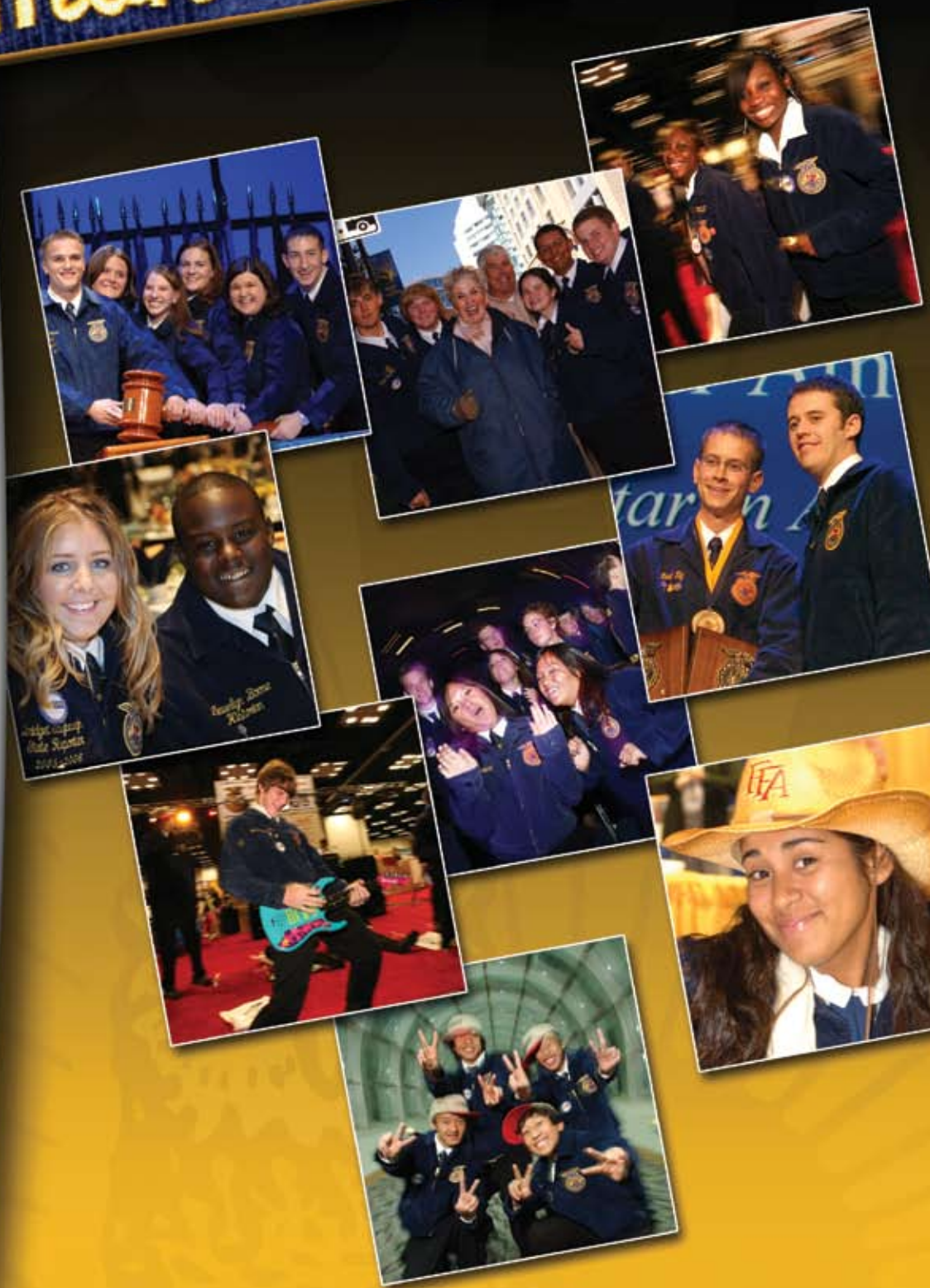


Common Thread



2006 Convention Proceedings



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WELCOME TO INDY!

The signs of welcome were everywhere, not just in the banners, but also in the friendly greetings and renowned Hoosier Hospitality of those who live and work in Indiana's capital city. Known as "The Crossroads of America," Indianapolis is conveniently located in our nation's heartland, providing a perfect venue and ideal hosts for the 79th National FFA Convention.



Against the backdrop of a spectacular autumn morning, Indiana Lt. Governor Becky Skillman led a press conference of dignitaries in welcoming "a sea of blue corduroy" to the state and applauded the outreach efforts, volunteerism and community service of FFA members. Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson noted that the national FFA convention is the largest convention in the city's history. Peterson said the city appreciates the strong financial impact provided by the event, but it is the ongoing association with FFA that provides an even greater source of pride.



During the welcoming ceremonies, both Lt. Governor Skillman and Mayor Peterson thanked FFA members for their willingness to participate in various projects to beautify or improve Indianapolis communities as part of a National Day of Service. Before the week was out, Gleaners Food Bank; Keep Indianapolis Beautiful; Indy Parks Kessler Beautification Project and Habitat for Humanity would all benefit from the generosity and involvement of FFA volunteers.

Indy Parks Kessler Beautification Project and Habitat for Humanity would all benefit from the generosity and involvement of FFA volunteers.

Indianapolis is only the third site for an FFA convention. In 1928, the first convention was held in Kansas City, Mo., and it remained the sole venue for the next 70 years. From 1999 through 2005, the honor belonged to Louisville, Ky., and now Indianapolis will host the convention for seven years.

Most convention sessions and exhibits this year were slated for either the Con-seco Fieldhouse or the RCA Dome/Indiana Convention Center. The street connecting these downtown facilities was designated "FFA Way" for the entire week and, to make getting around even easier, shuttles ran between these locations, the Indiana State Fairgrounds, the Indianapolis Zoo and the area hotels where attendees were staying.



Kayla Ann Villanueva and Mitchell Hardy, Indiana FFA Members from the Huntington County Chapter, said they liked the scenery in downtown Indianapolis. "Everything made me feel really welcomed to convention this year," said Villanueva. Hardy said that convention this year is a lot different than last year's convention in Louisville, Ky. "Everything is spread out, but it is nice and welcoming here in Indianapolis," he said.

Stephanie Crites, a resident of Indianapolis for 24 years, said, "It's interesting to see how everyone has come together for this."

Louis Contos, who has lived in Indianapolis for 47 years, has worked at Con-seco Fieldhouse for 16 years. "This is just another event for us, but this is also the finest group that we have ever had," said Contos.

Circle Centre Mall, located midway along FFA Way, was a gathering point for attendees looking to shop or enjoy the food court, which opened three hours earlier than usual to accommodate the early risers. Many

Signs of greetings for FFA members could be seen throughout the city, but how many banners were there really? Here's a breakdown!

- 400 pole banners
- 112 bike rack banners
- Numerous images at the Indianapolis International Airport
- One walkway wrap

How were those banners put up?"

Extensive permits! Eight installers used boomlift trucks, scaffolding and old-fashioned elbow grease to hang the banners



downtown restaurants and stores adjusted their offerings and prices for the younger crowd, and even the Indianapolis Motor Speedway reduced tour tickets by \$10 for convention attendees.



The relationship between Indianapolis and FFA grew even closer when National FFA Chief Operating Officer Doug Loudenslager announced a \$5 million project to expand the National FFA Center and build a Merchandise Center on the city's north-west side. The new 36,000-square-foot multiple-use facility will house the merchandising, licensing and customer distribution services departments and is needed to meet current demands and allow for future growth.

The move to Indianapolis has been a long time coming and would not have been possible without the precious time and talents of city and FFA leaders. According to Bob Bedell, the President and CEO of the Indianapolis Convention & Visitors Association, "the city has been planning for this for more than 20 years." He said the size of this convention required the services of more than 76,000 hospitality workers, and he expressed his thanks that the FFA had such confidence in the ICVA.



On behalf of more than 50,000 attendees of the 79th National FFA Convention, "Thank you, Indy, for the warm welcome!"



FFA MEMBERS TOUR NATIONAL CENTER

FFA members learn early that the National FFA Center relocated from Alexandria, Va., to its current home in Indianapolis in 1998. Now with the national FFA convention Indianapolis-based for the next seven years, FFA members and their advisors have an opportunity to take a behind-the-scenes look at the National FFA Organization.

Sarah Weaemam from Wisconsin attended the last convention in Louisville, Ky., and attended this year's convention in Indianapolis. She enjoys the differences between the two cities but loves seeing the heart of the national FFA organization. Her favorite part of the tour was the puzzle game, in which members had to find secret words hidden throughout the center. FFA members, advisors and visitors had to turn in their completed puzzles in order to be entered into a drawing for FFA-related prizes.

Tours of the center began in the FFA gardens and flowed upstairs to glimpse the office of National FFA Advisor Dr. Larry Case followed by a stop in the FFA supply service, which houses FFA merchandise ranging from educational supplies to presidential gavels used for opening ceremonies. Visitors also saw the Past National Officer Gallery with the portraits of officers dating back to 1928 when Leslie Applegate was elected as the FFA's first national president.

The center's defining feature is the two-story rotunda that resembles the inside of a feed grain silo. The lower part of the rotunda is known as the Hall of Achievement. Putnam County, Illinois, FFA member Tonia Lester said, "Seeing the FFA memorabilia in the bottom of the rotunda was the best part about the tour." The Hall of Achievement features a wall-sized FFA mural where members could gather for pictures. Other highlights include photographs of past U.S. presidents speaking at FFA events, such as the President Leadership Conference held annually in Washington, D.C.; the first official FFA manuals; photos of convention anniversaries; and the official charter year of each state.

FFA officials at the 79th National FFA Convention estimated that at least 20,000 students would pass through the gates of the center during the convention.

COURTESY CORPS LENDS A HELPING HAND

Headquartered at the Indiana Convention Center next to a "Lost and Found" sign, FFA Courtesy Corps provided a safe haven for members, advisors and staff who needed help during the convention. "What kind of help?" you may ask, and the answer may surprise you.

According to Crystal Hart, FFA program coordinator of Courtesy Corps, the team of 900-plus volunteers will do just about anything to help. "They sign up and say, 'I'll do whatever you want me to do.' That may range from running errands and doing office work to assisting people at the various sessions during the week."

Amy Henderson, FFA member of the Giles Chapter, Pearisburg, Va., said she volunteered for Courtesy Corps to give back to the organization. "I wanted to do something for FFA, something to help out. I participated in Courtesy Corps before, in Louisville, and I liked it."

On Wednesday, the "Lost and Found" sign helped direct one member to the Courtesy Corps help desk. Jacob Jonathan of Jennings County, Ind., said he wanted to turn in something he had found – \$100. He politely handed the neatly folded bill to Crystal Hart, who was surprised by the unusual find and pleased by the exemplary character displayed by this FFA member who didn't leave his name and would have gone unrecognized for the good deed if his blue jacket had not given away his identity. In that moment, we saw the FFA blue jacket and the gold standards as well.

FFA NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL CAREER SHOW: TOMORROW ON THE HORIZON



Ask FFA members what they like about the Career Show and you will discover one common answer: “The free stuff!” But dig a little deeper and you’ll find the show helps attendees broaden their horizons and plan their futures.

Bradley Turner, an FFA member from Broadway, Va., attended the event to explore educational opportunities. “All I’ve thought about is agricul-

ture since the eighth grade,” he said, “and I’m here to see what the colleges have to offer.” In addition to the colleges, he said the show is a great place to look at tractors.

The 41st National FFA Convention Career Show opened with special remarks by National FFA Western Region Vice President Stuart Joy. About the some 370 booths inside, Joy said, “these are the best of the best in the agriculture industry.” Joy encouraged members to find their own passion for science. It was at the career show that Joy found his own passion for the field he is now majoring in.



Inside the Career Show were, companies ranging from John Deere to Kraft and Dow Agro-Sciences, all of which offered not only future career suggestions but also games and free

giveaways for members. Always a big hit at the Career Show was the Kraft booth, where special guests the Kool-Aid man and the Planters Peanut mascots made appearances all week.

The exhibit halls and surrounding hallways were packed with more than 1,300 booths representing colleges, agriculture-related companies, fundraising companies, U.S. Armed Services, auto and truck manufacturers and state FFA associations. Attendees enjoyed a blend of information, education and hands-on training on the show floor.

Hobart Welders hosted a very popular booth that gave everyone the opportunity to use their newest welding machine. According to Sales Manager Doug Niswonger, welding demonstrations are always popular, especially

when they include prizes and “freebies.” This year, Hobart awarded welding helmets to the two participants with the best welds, and everyone who participated received a pair of Hobart work gloves.



Truck and automobile exhibits were also hot spots on the show floor. FFA members slid into the drivers’ seats to daydream about owning the vehicles, and often used the opportunity

for a “photo op” to commemorate the experience.

Many attendees had specific plans for what they hoped to accomplish at the Career Show. Under the guidance of their advisors, they sought out exhibits related to their interests, interviewed the exhibitors, and presented the information to classmates when they returned home. Worksheets provided FFA members with a checklist of questions to ask the interviewees and a place to record the answers.

Everyone certainly enjoyed the free stuff at the Career Show, but it was the stuff that must be earned that held the most value for FFA members as they explored the opportunities and possibilities that lie before them.



Gaining people skills and making life-changing connections is exactly what the Career Show strives to do. Three young women from the West Rowan FFA

Chapter listened while the Ocean Corporation explained their diving oceanography program. Brandi Eller said she was very interested in this because she had spent her entire life diving and swimming.

The Career Show is an incredible opportunity for FFA members to find their passions and explore colleges and business opportunities. FFA members saw it all, including two llamas who made a surprise appearance. No convention is complete until you’ve visited the Career Show at least once, if not twice.



The Agri-Entrepreneurship Education Program is designed to increase the amount of entrepreneurship being taught in local agriculture programs across the country. This program focuses on entrepreneurship – the values, requirements and challenges of owning your own business. With this information, students will be better prepared to become entrepreneurs and begin to perceive entrepreneurship as a viable career choice.

The Agri-Entrepreneurship Awards honor FFA members who have recognized a market opportunity that was overlooked by others and conceived a plan to pursue that opportunity.

During the 79th National FFA Convention 10 students were named National Agri-Entrepreneurs:

- Ben Alsum of Wisconsin
- Emily Arkfeld of Nebraska
- Sierra Enlow of Kentucky
- Jasey Goedeken of Nebraska
- Ashley Hudson of Colorado
- Alison Mebane of California
- Barry Prather of Tennessee
- Hollie Scott of Missouri
- Chelsey Shouse of Kentucky
- Samantha Williams of California

AGRI-ENTREPRENEURS HONORED

On Friday of convention week, the 10 recipients of this year's Agri-Entrepreneurship Awards were congratulated and encouraged by Tom Dorr, Under Secretary for Rural Development at USDA, and Mike Jackson, a past national FFA officer and the entrepreneur who started Agri Business Group in Indianapolis.

The National Agri-Entrepreneurship Award Program is sponsored by USDA Rural Development as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc., and according to Dorr, "USDA Rural Development is pleased to sponsor the program because investing in today's up-and-coming rural entrepreneurs helps build a bright future for them and their communities. The creativity and innovation that these young people bring to agriculture and rural America will make a difference in their lives and in their communities."

After the hearing from Dorr and Jackson, the 10 award recipients gathered to reflect on their individual projects and entrepreneurship in general. Without exception, they praised the FFA program and their advisors. They also chatted about the misconceptions some students may have about FFA, and how they have had to defend the organization as something that is far beyond "cows and plows."

Ben Alsum of Cambria, Wis., is one of the 10 who received \$1,000 and a commemorative plaque during the awards ceremony. He owns and operates Ben's Bovine Beauties, an enterprise that provides springing Holstein heifers as herd replacements and brokers cattle of all types.



"My business has grown from originally buying and raising heifers to becoming a source of quality cattle through purchase and resale," Alsum said. "I buy only quality cattle to resell, which has helped me become established as a good dealer with a good reputation. My goal is to introduce my services to as many area dairy farmers as possible and to promote the pedigrees of the heifers I am planning to sell as springers."

Alsum is a 2006 graduate of Randolph High School. While in high school, Alsum served as his FFA chapter vice president and chair of community development. He was on the basketball and football teams and was very active in his church youth group. He plans on continuing Ben's Bovine Beauties and expanding the business. "I'm already anticipating retirement," Alsum said with a chuckle.

Emily Arkfeld of Dunbar, Neb., was recognized for her enterprise that produces and sells drug-residue-free Hampshire pork for the retail market. She established Hampshire Hill Farm Pork as a freshman

in high school after getting compliments on pork she donated to an FFA Chapter fundraiser.

"I decided to diversify my swine enterprise to a value-added venture," Arkfeld said. "I find great personal reward when I have a customer that is so satisfied with my product that they make a repeat purchase, but the greatest compliment is when they refer someone else to me."



Arkfeld has served as FFA chapter president, vice president and secretary, and has been active in the student council, band and track at Lourdes Central Catholic High School. She plans to major in meat science at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, earn a doctoral degree and start a meat research business.

▶ **Sierra Enlow, of Hodgenville, Ky.**, owns and operates Enlow Farms, an enterprise that produces a combination of livestock for breeding and processing to fulfill an ethnic market niche, as well as a pumpkin venture. Enlow began building her business in 1997 and has continuously diversified her products since then.

"Having a combination of goats, sheep and cattle allows me to tap into the ethnic market that encases my community," Enlow said. "By marketing livestock directly to the consumer, I eliminate the need for the middleman, making the product cheaper for the consumer and allowing me to make a larger profit."



While attending LaRue County High School, Enlow served as FFA chapter president and parliamentarian. She received the Hugh O' Brian Youth Leadership Sophomore of the Year Award in 2004, belonged to the National Honor Society and placed first in the Regional FBLA Impromptu Speaking Contest. Currently, she is a freshman at the University of Kentucky, majoring in public service and leadership. Enlow plans to

attend the University of Kentucky's School of Law to pursue environmental law, which she intends to bring back to agriculture.

▶ Another award recipient, **Jasey Goedeken of Columbus, Neb.**, created Jasey's Jams, an enterprise that produces and markets many varieties of homemade jams and jellies. Goedeken began this project in July of 2003.

"Word of mouth and re-order customers are motivating factors that encourage me to continue my business and to look toward expansion while pursuing other marketing strategies," said Goedeken.

Goedeken sells her products at farmer's markets and crafts shows, and the Lakeview FFA Chapter has worked out an agreement to sell Jasey's Jams as a fundraiser. Goedeken is a 2006 graduate of Lakeview High School, where she served as FFA chapter reporter and president. She was involved in FBLA, National Honor Society, was an all-state softball player and received the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership award in 2004. Today, she is majoring in elementary education at the University of South Dakota and plans to continue making her jams and jellies through college and as a hobby while teaching.



▶ Award recipient **Ashley Hudson of Hotchkiss, Colo.**, was honored for her enterprise, Ashley's Goats Milk Soap. Hudson processes goat's milk into beauty products such as soap, lotion, lip balm and air fresheners.

"I started making soap for members of my family and realized that it was a great opportunity for me," Hudson said. She started marketing her products at the local crafts fair and now sells them at a local gift shop and salon. Hudson feels it is important to donate her product for door



prizes at crafts show and FFA functions to promote her business. "The business has been well received, and marketing is critical to its success and future profit ability," she said.

While attending Hotchkiss High School, Hudson served as FFA chapter vice president, historian and as district reporter. She was involved in volleyball, basketball, tennis and was a member of the National Honor Society. Currently, she is a freshman at Colorado State University, where she is majoring in agriculture education. She hopes to teach in a small agriculture-oriented town in eastern Colorado.

▶ **Alison Mebane of Woody, Calif.**, launched Alison Mebane's Vision to create and market wildflower greeting cards. She places a brief story about each of the wildflowers, their botanical use and other interesting facts on the backs of the cards. Wildflower seeds, when appropriate, are attached to the cards as well. The cards are packaged in corrugated cardboard and bundled with recycled baling twine.

Mebane markets her greeting cards at the local general store, candy shop, bookstore and at several local festivals. She primarily markets to tourists who would like to take a piece of Kern County home with them. "It seems that it would take something away from the magic of the wildflowers to mass produce the cards," said Mebane.



Mebane is a sophomore at North High School, where she has served as president of the Sierra Mountaineers 4-H Club and earned the Star Greenhand FFA chapter award. In addition to her greeting card business, Mebane raises show steers and breeding sheep.

▶ **Barry Prather of Guys, Tenn.**, saw a need and decided to meet it with his new business, Purebred Boer Goats. "Due to the large middle-eastern and Hispanic population increase of recent years, the demand for goat meat is greater than the supply," Prather said. He now raises goats for breeding stock as well as meat production.

Prather is a 2006 graduate of McNairy Central High School, where he served as FFA chapter greenhouse supervisor, fruit sale chairman and was an FFA state convention delegate. He also served as VICA president and was a member of the National Vocational-Technical Honor Society. Prather now attends the University of Tennessee at Martin, where he is majoring in animal science and hopes to specialize his studies in small ruminant production. Prather plans to continue his Boar goat business and return to it full time after graduation.



▶ For **Hollie Scott of Maysville, Mo.**, pet care stirred the entrepreneurial spirit. She owns and operates Grand Paws LLC, an enterprise that grooms and boards dogs and cats from all over the country.

After beginning her operation in her parents' garage, it became obvious that she would need to expand her business to a larger facility, so she is building a state-of-the-art-facility that will house 50 dogs and cats with rooms for grooming and greeting. "Once I became dedicated to building a business, it really took off and has grown far beyond what I originally had expected," Scott said.

"I have one customer who is from England and some that come from other states such as Hawaii, California and New Jersey," Scott said. "These customers are dog owners who have heard of me at dog shows and know that I know how to keep their animals in prime show condition." She also takes care of animals that need special rehabilitation care.

Scott is a senior at Cameron High School, where she has served as FFA chapter reporter, secretary and vice president. She is a member of the student council, the National Honor Society and both the varsity softball and soccer teams. Scott plans to attend the University of Missouri-



Columbia in the fall of 2007. After earning her doctorate in veterinary medicine she plans to pursue a career in animal pharmaceutical sales.

▶ **Chelsey Shouse of Taylorsville, Ky.**, turned her interest in herbs into a business that grows and sells fresh herbs to retail customers. She started the enterprise, Marie's Erbs, after realizing that local stores were not selling fresh herbs.

"The real key to this was the fact that I wanted to help my community by supplying them with something that is used by a large number of people, but not found regularly at stores in our area," Shouse said. In addition to herbs, her product line includes potpourri, tea, recipe cards, and decorative pots for the herbs.



Shouse is a senior at Spencer County High School, where she has earned her FFA Greenhand degree, chapter degree and was on the farm business management team that placed first in the state. She is also a member of FBLA, FCCLA and volunteers for the local Angel Tree. Shouse plans to pursue a career in pharmacology after attending the University of Louisville.

▶ **Sammie's Pride Dairy Goat Milk Soap** earned an award for **Samantha Williams of Bakersfield, Calif.** Her enterprise processes goat's milk and fragrances to produce mild, yet tantalizing, body soap. Williams began the business between her freshman and sophomore years of high school after noticing the ingredients of specialty soaps in a gift shop.

Williams explained her motivation to make soap very simply: "As anyone who spends time milking can tell you, throwing out my goat's milk at the end of each milking is just plain wasteful. I thought making soap was a great way to use the excess milk produced by my goats."



Williams has experimented with different fragrances, molds and textures of soap and offers a variety of options for the consumer. Her products are available at the local farmer's market, and some local businesses sell her soap at their stores.

Williams is a senior at Bakersfield High School, where she has served as FFA chapter president, sectional president and regional vice president. She is also involved in band, tennis and soccer, as well as many community service projects such as Adopt-A Family. After graduation, Williams plans on obtaining a degree in agriculture sales and becoming a sales leader in the agriculture industry.

While the people, their skills, opportunities and enterprises are diverse, there is a common thread of blue and gold that now binds them together as recipients of the 2006 National FFA Agri-Entrepreneurship Awards.



SCHOOL OFFICIALS LEARN MORE ABOUT FFA



Approximately 230 school officials from across the country attended an activity-packed day at the 79th National FFA Convention, where they could see for themselves the significant impact the organization has on students, schools and communities.

The group enjoyed VIP seating at the fourth General Session for presentations by national FFA officers and a keynote address by former NBA basketball standout and sports broadcaster Clark Kellogg. Afterward, they visited Career Development Events at the Indiana State Fairgrounds and the Agriscience Institute at the FFA Agricultural Career Show. School officials learned about the diverse career opportunities available in the agriculture industry and how FFA prepares students for success.

During the School Officials' Luncheon, they heard a presentation by Richard Lafave, Director of Agri-Business at National Starch Food Innovations. Lafave spoke of the short supply of educated talent available to meet the needs of the agriculture industry but was encouraged by the character and abilities of FFA members. "I just hope they will take a tour of our plant and consider coming back to work for us," he told the group.



The luncheon's keynote speaker was Dr. Troy Justesen, Assistant Secretary, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, United States Department of Education. His message stressed the importance of adequate funding and support for programs as powerful as those offered by FFA.

The luncheon concluded with Laila Hajji, Secretary, Oklahoma FFA Association, who shared her story of reluctantly joining the organization, only to realize it was one of the most important choices of her life. "FFA has the power to equip students," she said, citing her leadership training as vital to her successes.

Many of the attendees were able to visit with their schools' FFA members at the convention. Kent Shafer, Principal of Franklin Monroe High School in Pittsburg, Ohio, and his Superintendent, Dave Gray, were proud of their FFA students for recently qualifying for the national soil judging contest in Oklahoma.

Shafer and Gray had plenty of praise for their FFA advisor, George Skidmore, who was attending the convention with a group of students. "George is more than an advisor," said Gray. "He farms, drives a school bus and gets along great with the students."

School officials were able to get together for a roundtable discussion after the luncheon to brag about their own versions of George Skidmore and learn even more about what agriculture education and the FFA has done for their schools.



Hundreds of Volunteers Launch National FFA Day of Service

With the help of civic leaders, the National FFA Organization, a Local Organizing Committee, Toyota and Timberland PRO, hundreds of FFA volunteers commemorated the very first National FFA Day of Service by participating in various service projects throughout the greater Indianapolis area. These projects fit well with the goals set forth in the FFA motto – “Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve” – and demonstrated that members know how to put these 12 words into action.

Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. provided FFA with a fleet of 43 courtesy vehicles, and as a prelude to the day of service spearheaded the “Can Hunger” food drive to aid Gleaners Food Bank in Indianapolis. “FFA is a great youth organization,” said Brian Smith, Toyota’s Corporate Manager-Truck Operations, “and we’re pleased that we’re able to lend our support to make this year’s convention the best ever.”

Several state FFA officers had the chance to work at Gleaners on Tuesday of convention week, and Thursday shift participants were challenged to exceed their numbers. In response, FFA members along with Andy Miller, Agriculture Director for the state of Indiana, and representatives from Timberland PRO and Toyota joined the assembly line and enthusiastically boxed the canned goods.

NATIONAL FFA DAY OF SERVICE: OUR STANDARD OF COOPERATION

“Who are the blue and the gold? Who are those students helping us out?”

These are some of the questions that residents of Indianapolis were asking as more than 700 FFA members headed out into the community to lend a helping hand. The 79th National FFA Convention played host to the first ever National FFA Day of Service. In participation with Indianapolis civic leaders, the National FFA Organization and Local Organizing Committee developed this new element of convention to promote servant leadership through agricultural education and FFA member participation. Sites selected in Indianapolis were Gleaners Food Bank, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful – Partners in Education, Indy Parks Kessler Beautification Project, and Habitat for Humanity building sites in the downtown area.

Gleaners Food Bank is an 83,000-square-foot facility in which a Commodity Supplementary Food Program takes place. FFA members participated in the assembly line building boxes and filling each with 40 pounds of USDA provided food for senior citizens in the Indianapolis area. In only an eight-hour work day, caring and dedicated FFA members were able to pack 2,918 boxes equaling more than 116,720 pounds of food. This packed food will not only provide much needed groceries throughout the holiday season for Indy seniors, but it will also begin 2007 with a well-stocked warehouse .



President and CEO of Gleaners Food Bank, Pamela Altmeyer commented about the volunteerism of FFA with appreciation in her heart and tears in her eyes. “What wonderful people,” she exclaimed. “The FFA members’ characteristics of enthusiasm, support, and love are what every teenager should have. I know that they will take this experience away from Indianapolis and implement it in their own communities. That gives me hope for tomorrow.”



Keep Indianapolis Beautiful – Partners in Education is a project in



Timberland President and CEO Jeff Swartz highlighted the National Day of Service with his keynote message, "Call to Service." A strong believer and practitioner of corporate social responsibility and volunteerism, Swartz is one of 19 founding CEOs selected for President Bush's task force on national service. He believes Timberland's affiliations with organizations such as FFA are evidence of the company's commitment to volunteerism and leadership.

Timberland PRO is recognized as an industry leader in the design, engineering and marketing of premium-quality footwear and accessories for working professionals, and firmly embraces the parent company's philosophy of "doing well and doing good." Timberland PRO provided product discounts to FFA members who participated in the National Day of Service.

Throughout the city, charter buses delivered large groups of service-minded FFA members who made a difference in Indianapolis. It was a day for them to get their hands dirty, have some fun and turn 12 important words into action.

which FFA members participated in landscaping and beautification of a local Indianapolis charter school. While at Irvington Charter School, FFA members joined the 450 students and 91 community volunteers to plant 100 new trees and 500 new shrubs and perennials as part of a reforestation project within the city of Indianapolis. The blue and gold clad members also cleaned up a wooded area near the school by clearing brush and poison ivy and clearing trails.



Parents picking up their students after school were thrilled with the new look around the school. With many thanks, members of the Indianapolis community highly regard FFA for their service to complete strangers and belief in better days through better ways. Working with the Irvington students also impacted the FFA members. Gabriela Nazario of the Manuel Mendia Moret, Puerto Rico FFA chapter was thrilled about her National FFA Day of Service experience. "I loved it," she said enthusiastically. "I wanted to help because as a Girl Scout, community activist, and FFA member, I feel it is my duty to serve others."

Indy Parks Kessler Beautification Project gave FFA members the opportunity to experience and gain knowledge about being good urban land stewards through rejuvenation of land within the Kessler Park System of Indianapolis. Even with the rain and in only eight hours, FFA members seeded and planted more than acres of the park system. They also cleared more than four tons of garbage from the site. Thanks to the efforts of FFA members', the beautification project is six months ahead of schedule.

Joseph Wynns, director of Indy Parks and Recreation, compared the dedication and service of FFA members to sunshine. "Even though it's raining, the sun is shining up in the sky, above all the clouds," Wynns said. "Your positive attitude and willingness to help is a ray of sunshine for our community. You have the power to make it sunshine here. Sunshine is only a state of mind. You showed us adults how to be dedicated."

Indianapolis addresses the needs of its residents by fabricating Habitat for Humanity houses. FFA members teamed up to install siding, porch posts and beams, and painted both interior and exteriors. They also cleaned up the neighborhoods of the houses. As part of the agreement in receiving the Habitat for Humanity house, the families must assist with the construction processes as well. FFA members were able to meet the deserving families and converse with them. Brothers Jeremy and Jonathan Edwards of the Clintwood, Virginia

- How many FFA members helped?
700
- 2,918** – number of boxes equaling **116,720 pounds** of food were packed during the day of service
- 100 new trees** and **500 new shrubs** and perennials were planted as part of a reforestation project within the city.
- More than **4 acres** planted and seeded at the Kessler Park System
- More than **4 tons** of garbage removed from the Kessler Park System
- 2,400** - The goal for the number of next year's participants!



FFA chapter were pleased to help and learned a lot from their Day of Service. "It is amazing what you can accomplish when people get together," Jonathan said with a smile on his face. "When people see FFA members out there, it helps us uphold our well respected reputations."

To celebrate and honor the volunteers of the National FFA Day of Service, a reception was held and was emceed by Indiana FFA State President, Tyler Tenbarge. There he challenged FFA members to incorporate the lessons they learned during their Day of Service into their own communities. "The reason for the National FFA Day of Service is not to just serve the Indianapolis community," he stated. "The reason is to enable you to have the passion, motivation and drive to take back what you have learned to your home states and chapters."



The first National FFA Day of Service provided opportunities for FFA members to shine. "I believe that this was just the beginning; just a chip off of the iceberg," said Emily Maher, a member of the Local Organizing Committee representing Maribeth Smith and Associates of Indianapolis. "Service includes more than just money; it is time, talents and treasures. These students showed the Indianapolis community that they care."

This year it was 700 FFA member volunteers. Next year, the goal is to have more than 2,400. Just imagine if the volunteer list exceeded that and had thousands of FFA members out in the community helping out the residents of Indianapolis. When FFA members put their hearts and minds into it, they can accomplish great things.

STUDENT'S STUDY OF PLANT TISSUE WINS MAJOR AWARD

Iowa Student is Agriscience Student of the Year

A study on contamination control of plant tissue won a Stuart, Iowa, student the title of 2006 National FFA Organization Agriscience Student of the Year at this year's national FFA convention.



Allison Wilson attends West Central Valley High School and is a member of the West Central FFA Chapter. Her award was presented during the 79th National FFA Convention in an onstage ceremony on Oct. 27.

As a sophomore, Wilson began taking biotechnology classes, which sparked her interest in agriculture. As a result, she researched tissue culture, which is a prominent field in biotechnology. When she conducted experiments on tissue culture, she noticed that bacteria or fungus always seemed to show up, so she wanted to determine the best way to reduce this process. She discovered that fungicide helped decrease the amount of fungus but was unable to find an effective way to decrease the bacteria levels.

Her love for agriscience continues to grow, and she is currently working on making ethanol from bluestem grass.

"FFA has given me the motivation to do agriscience," Wilson said. "I feel my current project on ethanol is a topic that needs to be researched and more information discovered. I set high goals for myself, and FFA has helped me to achieve them."

Wilson plans to go into the field of engineering when she attends college, focusing on either agricultural engineering or environmental engineering. She is the daughter of Eileen and Dan Wilson. Her FFA advisors are Dan Wilson and Teresa Vandelune.

The Agriscience Student Scholarship and Recognition Program is sponsored by Monsanto as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. Eligible FFA members are selected on the basis of research projects involving agriscience skills, using applications and new technologies in their high school agriculture classes. Students apply these lessons to their supervised agricultural experience (SAE). They are also evaluated on their academic achievement, as well as their involvement in school and community activities.

2006 Agriscience Fair Winners Named

The 2006 Agriscience Awards were presented on stage during the seventh general session at the 79th National FFA Convention. The Agriscience Fair Recognition Program is sponsored by Ford Motor Company Fund as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The winners are listed below by event:

Biochemistry/Microbiology/Food Science

Division One: Aaron Heishman, Virginia
Division Two: Julie Wilcox, Arkansas
Division Three: Aaron Spesard and Jonathan Bush, Indiana
Division Four: Tim Fresonke and Nick Devillers, Minnesota

Botany

Division One: Josh Johnson, New York
Division Two: Kaitlyn Lingus, Colorado
Division Three: Alexandria Schultes and Brook Nussle, Texas
Division Four: Kendra Gerdes and Lisa Niedermeyer, Nebraska

Engineering

Division One: Ethan Erickson, Iowa
Division Two: Angela Garcia, Texas
Division Three: Sydney Bennett, Texas
Division Four: Timmy Black, North Carolina

Environmental Science

Division One: Grant Slinger, Colorado
Division Two: Keely Goodgame, New Mexico
Division Three: Victor Flores and Chris Daniels, New York
Division Four: Jonathan Suncar and Kemeisha Patterson, New York

Zoology

Division One: Eddie Andert, Arizona
Division Two: Christy Rukamp, Wisconsin
Division Three: Kassie Church and Amy Kringle, Wisconsin
Division Four: Tyler Bridwell and Michael Goodman, Georgia

TEACHER MAKES SCIENCE COME TO LIFE FOR STUDENTS

Washington resident is 2006 Agriscience Teacher of the Year

The National FFA Organization has chosen Harold Mackin of Rochester, Wash., as the 2006 Agriscience Teacher of the Year.

The award honors an agricultural education instructor who brings excellence to curriculum and presentation to the agriscience classroom and FFA activities.

Mackin is the agricultural science instructor and FFA advisor for the Rochester FFA chapter in Rochester, Wash.



Science has been integrated throughout the agriculture curriculum at Rochester High School through a cooperative effort with the science department staff. The agriscience courses teach equivalent skills and knowledge as the science department courses, and prepare students to meet or exceed the Washington State Science Grade Level Expectations. It also prepares them for the master of the science section of the state graduation exam.

"Students investigate the application of earth and physical science concepts and principles their freshman year through a course in Environmental Agriscience," Mackin said. "The course gives an in-depth study of soils, agriculture ecology, weather and biomes on the earth. Applied chemistry and physics, where students learn concepts in pH, chemical properties, water quality are explored as well as electricity and simple machines. Students are introduced to scientific inquiry and its applications in agriscience."

Mackin creates his own instructional methods and materials to help students understand a variety of scientific concepts, such as DNA, chemical properties and more. He also formed partnerships with members of the community, so students could see how the results of their agriscience projects have direct, real-world applications.

Mackin continues to see the number of FFA members increase, as more agriscience classes are added to the curriculum, and this year, for the first time, the chapter had a team participating in the state FFA Agriscience Fair.

The Agriscience Teacher of the Year program is sponsored by the PotashCorp as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.



AGRICULTURE TEACHERS TAKE INNOVATIVE IDEAS FROM AGRISCIENCE INSTITUTE

While more than 50,000 FFA members took part in leadership workshops and business sessions at the 79th National FFA Convention, their agriculture teachers participated in the convention's Agriscience Institute.

Agriculture educators learned new ways to incorporate innovative methods, new technology and current issues into the classroom at the Agriscience Institute.

Beginning at 9 a.m., workshops were conducted at 45-minute intervals for each day of the career show in the Indianapolis Convention Center. Professional Learning Units, kits that contain all materials needed for completion of each topic, were offered to educators for each session attended.

DuPont teamed with the National FFA Organization, Lab-Aids and the National Agriculture Association of Educators to provide six workshops for agriculture educators during the convention including Food Safety: Inhibiting Microbial Growth; Food Preservation and Nutrient Value; Groundwater Contamination: Trouble in Fruitvale; Plant Genetics and Breeding Improved Crops; Biofuels: The Ethanol Alternative; and Creating and Understanding the Use of Topographic Maps.

DuPont's goal is to provide teachers with unique and exciting products that help facilitate a more meaningful hands-on experience for the classroom. Phyllis Buchanan of the DuPont Office of Education said DuPont hopes to create activities that are practical and aid in increasing the level of science content in the classroom.

"We want students to understand how quickly science changes," Buchanan said. "We like students to take a real issue, like Feeding the World, and then gather information, conduct an experiment, perform research, make decisions and make an education inquiry about the issue."

Buchanan said the Agriscience Institute is designed for agriculture educators to understand the importance of bringing both science and agriculture together in the classroom. DuPont helps agriculture educators in the classroom by increasing the science level content in lesson plans and adding real world situations into all activities.

Along with DuPont, the Agriscience Institute provided agriculture educators with interactive classes in LifeKnowledge® and the Core resource catalog. The LifeKnowledge® program is a strategic initiative of the National FFA Organization to further help agriculture students develop skills in leadership, personal growth and career success. The Core resource catalog is a guide that offers great educational support products that will assist educators in classroom instruction

DTN was also at the Agriscience Institute. They provided agri-business and interactive marketing activities for agriculture educators to take into the classroom. DTN's Risk Management Curriculum is designed to teach students the basics of what a market is, who the players are in a market, what affects the market and how to take advantage of market movements.

Agriculture educators stopped in at DTN to learn how to help students get a jump start on the world of agricultural marketing fundamentals, industry trends and much more. DTN provided three workshop sessions entitled "Market Basics," "Take Advantage of Market Opportunities" and "What to Watch for in a Market."

The Agriscience Institute helps educators by giving them ideas for engaging their students in an exciting science-based curriculum. These innovative ideas will propel students to learn at a higher level.

FFA ALUMNI CELEBRATES THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP



The National FFA Alumni Association held its 35th convention, Power of Partnership in the Indianapolis Convention Center on the afternoon of Thursday, Oct. 26. The National FFA Alumni Convention allows alumni members to gather and share ideas and inspirations, conduct association business and award one another for outstanding achievements in service to FFA, agriculture and their communities.

Assistant Office of Vocational and Adult Education Secretary, Dr. Troy R. Justesen, opened the alumni convention by encouraging alumni members to carry the message to the rest of the country that agriculture is imperative and the backbone of the world.

"You are a principal value in agriculture education," Assistant Secretary Justesen said. "You are life-long educators, sending a positive message to school boards and each State Department of Education."

As a thank you to Dr. Justesen, the National FFA Alumni association awarded him with a lifetime membership to the association.



As the convention room filled with FFA members, alumni members and guests, keynote speaker Chad Hymas, member of the National Speaker Association, inspired all with his motivational speech, "Who Needs Legs When You Have Wings."

Hymas said the power of partnership is the power of what it can do for you and the power of relationships it brings. If you change what you believe, you have the ability to create partnerships that will forever change your life.

"Don't be afraid to rely on other people," Hymas said. "Change something about yourself, think new dreams, think new thoughts. Set world records within yourself and your association, it all depends on what you believe; all it takes is wings."

Hymas became quadriplegic five years ago after a serious accident. Although he is paralyzed, his dreams are still alive today. In addition to fulfilling his dream of managing a 5,100-acre elk preserve, he travels more than 180,000 miles a year while speaking at 160 different events. Hymas has raced in marathons, and in the summer of 2003, he set a world record by wheeling his chair from Salt Lake City to Las Vegas, 513 miles.



The 35th National FFA Alumni Convention brought inspiration, awarded members and chapters on excellence and motivated current members to strengthen partnerships amongst themselves.

There are more than 46,000 National FFA Alumni Members who work to support FFA members in their quests for premier leadership, personal growth and career success while ensuring that all people in their communities can do the same.

FFA ALUMNI AUCTION – ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER HOLLER

The 2006 National FFA Alumni Convention was filled with the customary awards, social get-togethers, business sessions and opportunities to win give-away items.

But it is the auction that really got the alumni excited enough to holler.

Every year, silent and live auctions are conducted to raise money for FFA student scholarships. Last year, the auction raised \$61,395 to help students attend the Washington Leadership Conference; \$5,000 that was evenly divided for five collegiate scholarships through the National FFA Foundation Scholarship Program; and another \$1,000 for a collegiate scholarship that went to an American FFA Degree Recipient. With money going to such good causes, there is always a good turnout for the auction and the bidding is spirited. This year was no different.

Alan Estes of Stewart, Neb., successfully bid on a lease for a New Holland TS 125A Deluxe tractor with a baler. The value of the lease was estimated at \$10,000, but Estes offered the top bid of \$6,300. "I do custom bailing," said Estes, "and this is a great deal for me." His daughter, Anita, was the 2005 – 2006 National FFA Central Region Vice President.

Other items on the auction block included decorative wall hangings, a welder, a hypnotist show, a Ford F-150 XLT truck, and a BBQ cooker that was built by FFA members. Drawings were held for a Cub Cadet riding lawnmower and an Apple iPod, and, to cap the evening, the auctioneer sold all of the planted mums that decorated the stage.

The auction was conducted by the Milton FFA Alumni of Milton, Wis., and FFA Advisor Bob Johnson handled the duties as auctioneer. The event was well attended, and, if the chant of the auctioneer and the response from the crowd was any indication, a good time was had by all.

How did FFA Alumni help this year?

- Raised \$117,711 to fund scholarships
- Funded 126 full and partial WLC scholarships
- Awarded five \$1,000 scholarships to students pursuing careers in agricultural education
- Awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to an American FFA Degree recipient
- Had 186 donors give to the Alumni Auction
- Sold more than 1,198 packages



Distinguished in Service

During the national FFA convention, the National FFA Organization recognized clubs, agencies and organizations that have greatly contributed to agricultural science education and FFA programs through the Distinguished Service Citation (DSC). Awards such as the DSC recognize that FFA has a greater impact on students through the cooperation of the entire community. FFA and agricultural science education programs have helped millions of students achieve extraordinary success for 79 years because of this remarkable dedication. The award was presented on stage at the 79th National FFA Convention. Those organizations who received the honor include: Todd Lighthall, Director of The Oswegatchie Education Center in Croghan, N.Y.; Wayne Esterle, Member-In Bloom Again of the Kentucky Florist Association, in Louisville, Ky. and Clay Robbins, President of Lilly Endowment, Inc.

During the last seven years that the National FFA Convention was held in Louisville, Ky., **The Kentucky Florists Association** provided both industry professionals and almost all the floral product and related materials needed for the National Floriculture Career Development Event. This in-kind donation equated to approximately \$70,000 total. The association also provided personnel and vans to transport hundreds of arrangements to the Veteran's Hospital, so FFA members could distribute them to patients and staff.

The Lilly Endowment supports the National FFA in many ways. They provided support for the Building Our American Communities program and contributed to the National FFA Center Capital Campaign. Most recently they provided a grant to the National FFA Foundation and the Indiana FFA Foundation to support the development of volunteerism. In addition, Lilly provided a significant portion of the funding to bring the National FFA Convention to Indianapolis.

The Oswegatchie Education Center has hosted the New England/New York National Leadership Conference for State Officers (NLCSO) for the past 16 years. They work hard to ensure that all the needs of the state officers, state staff and families are met. The directors have always worked to keep costs low while still providing the highest quality service possible. Thanks to the efforts of the Oswegatchie Education Center directors and staff, the participating states have had a quality educational experience.



BUSINESS PARTNERS AND FRIENDS HONORED ON STAGE DURING THE NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION

Ten individuals were selected this year by the National FFA Organization to receive a special VIP Citation. The VIP Citations recognizes individuals for making significant contributions to agricultural science education. It is one of the most prestigious awards a person may receive for supporting FFA and its programs. Those selected were honored during an onstage presentation at the 79th National FFA Convention. Awards such as the VIP Citation recognize that FFA contributes to the mission of success by impacting students through the hard work and cooperation of dedicated individuals. Without such strong and outstanding commitment, FFA would not be able to help build strong individuals of character in their members, who in turn build strong families, communities and industries.



Those who were selected include: David Skinner, Executive Director of Georgia Development Authority in Atlanta, Ga.; Drefus Williams, retired agriculture teacher in Sumter, S.C.; Will Lewis, Director in Nashville, Tenn.; Dwight Armstrong, Ph.D.; President and CEO of North American Nutrition Companies in Lewisburg, Ohio; Dr. Robert Marshall, Professor Emeritus, University Of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.; Dr. Lewis Lauterbach of Osage, Iowa; Dr. Raleigh Jobes, Consultant for AFARM Consulting in Stillwater, Okla.; Louis Horton (post-humously) agricultural educator, from Elko, Nev. and Richard Barker, retired state FFA advisor from Wakefield, N.H., and Dr. John Hillison, Professor and Department Head at Virginia Tech, from Blacksburg, Virginia.



➤ **Dwight Armstrong**, Ph.D. from Kettering, Ohio, is the CEO of North American Nutrition and has served on the National FFA Foundation Sponsors Board for the past four years, serving as the chair in 2005. He is a personal contributor to the National FFA Foundation and has annually contributed more than \$1,000 to their hope chapter in Kentucky. He was also instrumental in developing the Ray Fowler /Armstrong Family Scholarship, given to members who plan to pursue a degree in agriculture.

➤ During his time as State Advisor of the New Hampshire FFA Association, **Richard Barker** implemented many changes, including revitalizing the New Hampshire FFA Foundation, which vastly increased funding for state programs. He worked as the Eastern Region representative on the Big E Committee and as a Career Development

Superintendent. Aside from his contributions to the New Hampshire and National FFA Organizations, he has also been an active supporter of 4-H. He has spent more than 45 years as an agriculture educator and administrator.

➤ **Dr. John Hillison** of Blacksburg, Va., is known throughout the agricultural education community as one of the leading historians on FFA. He has written numerous articles for nationally known journals and has authored and co-authored texts that are being used by agricultural students. He has also represented AAAE on the national board. For the past 25 years, he has organized a booth at the national FFA convention and judged numerous events both on the local and national level.

➤ **Louis Horton** from Elko, Nev., began his career as an agricultural education instructor in the mid 1960's. In addition to teaching high school agriculture, he served as the Nevada FFA Executive Secretary. He was key in developing many FFA programs, including WLC, BLAST-Off, NLCSO and most recently, the National Officer Agricultural Issues Tour and Training in California. Horton is also an Honorary American Degree Recipient, post-humously.

➤ **Dr. Raleigh Jobes** from Stillwater, Okla., is a consultant with AFARM Consulting and has been an active support of the National FFA Organization for more than 25 years. He has served on the FF Farm Business Management Committee since 1979 and was a key force in developing the National FFA Farm Business Management Career Development Event. He has served as assistant superintendent of the CDE and as chair of the Southern Farm Management Extension Committee.

➤ **Dr. Lewis Lauterbach** from Osage, Iowa, has been a dedicated agricultural education instructor for many years and received his Honorary American Degree in 1975. He coached two teams that went on to be National Career Development Event winners and has served on the Farm Management CDE Committee for more than 15 years. He and his wife have been active on the national level for several years.

➤ **Will Lewis** from Nashville, Tenn., served as the Tennessee FFA State Consultant for 20 years. He was the assistant superintendent for the National FFA Livestock Judging CDE, served on the National FFA Foundation Board, coordinated the Tennessee State Leadership camp and developed Tennessee's Agriscience course. Lewis was also instrumental in establishing the Tennessee FFA Foundation. He is a life member of the National FFA Alumni Association and is an Honorary American Degree Recipient.

➤ **Dr. Robert Marshall** from Columbia, Mo., has made significant contributions to the National FFA Dairy Foods Career Development event for more than 35 years. In addition to his work on the committee, he has written several books on teaching dairy foods and manuals for coaches on how to mix products when preparing students for the event. He is responsible for creating the unique Tiger Stripe ice cream flavor as well as directing the research and service component of the Arbuckle Ice Cream laboratory.

➤ **David Skinner** of Winder, Ga., the executive director of the Georgia Development Authority, has attended the national FFA convention for the past 15 years, serving as a national judge for both proficiency winners and star awards. He has also served on the board of directors for the Georgia FFA Foundation for 10 years and is currently serving vice chairman. He has also served on the Georgia FFA foundation Sponsors' Board for six years.

➤ **Drefus Williams** from Sumter, S.C., was involved with Agricultural Education and FFA for more than 50 years. He began teaching ag ed in 1953 at Columbus High School in Lakeview, S.C. and then proceeded to Pinewood, S.C. where he touched hundreds of students' lives through FFA and NFA programs. Williams is an Honorary American Degree recipient and in 2001 received the H.O. Sargent Non-member Award.

STARS OVER AMERICA PAGEANT TAKES CENTER STAGE IN INDIANAPOLIS

Four outstanding FFA members who represent success in agricultural education were awarded the most prestigious honors that the National FFA Organization awards.

The **American Star in Agribusiness**, **American Star in Agriscience**, **American Star in Agricultural Placement** and the **American Star Farmer** were awarded to students who have received the American FFA Degree, established profitable agricultural enterprises or programs focusing on an agricultural field, demonstrated outstanding active involvement – both in FFA and their communities – and have met other rigorous agricultural education and leadership requirements.

During the convention, each finalist participated in interviews by a panel of judges, who ultimately named the top candidate in each area. Winners were announced in an onstage convention ceremony and received a plaque and an award of \$2,000.

➤ American Star Farmer award winner **Andrew Bowman of Oneida, Ill.**, runs a 316-acre operation with what started as a 10-acre project.

“Just from observing my grandfather and father, I knew that a farmer was a family man first, a community leader second and then a businessman, biologist, market analyst, accountant and mechanic,” the 20-year-old said. He has big plans to diversify his farm by venturing into other enterprises to supplement the operation.



Bowman said his family allowed him to transition into the family farm. He wants to expand his farming operation and revamp the technology for the farm, installing accounting and record-keeping software and an updated filing system.

“I really have to credit family,” the R.O.W.V.A. FFA Chapter member said. “I truly believe you don’t get anywhere in life without the guidance and influence from others.”

Bowman, a student at the University of Illinois, is pursuing a degree in crop sciences with an emphasis in agribusiness management. He is considering a master’s degree in agricultural economics or agricultural policy and would like to work in the agribusiness industry.

“Awards are nice but people won’t remember what you did for yourself, people will remember what you did for your community. I want to give back to the people and the organizations that gave back to me,” said Bowman.

➤ American Star in Agribusiness award winner **Neal Ely** developed his mom’s pickled asparagus into a recipe, which led him to top honors.

The 22-year-old Grafton, Neb., native owns Ely Farms Pickled Asparagus Spears. The product is marketed to gourmet, specialty and gift, grocery and liquor stores in Nebraska and surrounding states. Ely worked with the University of Nebraska Food Processing Facility to develop the pickled asparagus, which is approved by the Food and Drug Administration.



“During the first year, I sold 500 jars in my hometown, he said. “After that, I began to market my product across the state.”

In order to sell his pickled asparagus, Ely needed an FDA-approved space to process it. He used an old building that existed on his family farm and converted it into a commercial kitchen. The product is one that needs a lot of his attention.

“I feel really humbled, it is a huge honor to be in this position. I just want to encourage others to work hard, and not let it take away anything from what they learned.”

Currently, Ely attends the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and is pursuing a degree in Agribusiness.

➤ American Star in Agricultural Placement **Matthew Repinski of Amherst, Wis.**, began working for his uncle

at the age of 10, feeding and caring for the livestock. Even at that young age, he knew that he had a passion for agriculture.

He worked for Gordondale Farms, a large dairy operation, where his main responsibilities included construction on a new dairy facility and daily farm chores. Currently, the farm milks 900 cows three times a day. They also have a sow farrow to finish operation of 300 hogs. Repinski's duties now vary greatly, including planting and harvesting crops and feeding and caring for the livestock.




Repinski is now employed at the University of Wisconsin Swine Research and Training Center. At UW-SRTC, he performs a number of tasks including feeding, cleaning, dealing with animal health and breeding and some record keeping.

"It is a great honor to be here. I really owe a lot to my advisor for pushing me and for their dedication and commitment for spending time with me and pushing me to apply for the award," he said.

He is currently a junior at the University of Wisconsin, double majoring in dairy science and agronomy. He hopes to secure a position with a large nutrition operation where he can work with farmers to make the most of their production agriculture operations.

"I want to concentrate more on the dairy herd, feeding program and crop quality to deliver consistent rations for optimum efficiency and production," said Repinski.

 American Star in Agriscience **Ryan Scholz of Newberg, Ore.**, came to realize his passion for research during his junior year of high school when he conducted a study on the growth habits of trout in his agriscience class. Soon he came upon a large amount of information that greatly interested him regarding concerns over whether hatchery fish being released into Oregon Rivers were a detriment to the ecosystem.

Scholz began working with the Oregon Department of Agriculture and developed a study that examined the effect of modifications to traditional hatchery raceways on the growth of rainbow trout.



A senior at Oregon State University double majoring in animal science and bioresource research, Scholz has learned that his desire to be a large animal vet and his passion for research can go hand-in-hand. During his freshman year, he began working with a professor in the department of animal science researching the utilization of sheep to control non-native plants.

This 21-year-old's career goal is to practice large-animal medicine for several years and then expand his practice to include a consulting business serving farmers, ranchers and veterinarians in rural areas. He hopes to reach those farms and practices that are un-served by the university.

"I am amazed and honored to have been selected as one of the top projects in the National FFA Organization. It took a lot of dedication through the years and just took sticking with it," said Scholz.



THE STARS OVER AMERICA FINALISTS

The Stars Over America, one of the highest honors to receive from the National FFA Organization, were announced on stage on Thursday, Oct. 26, during the 79th National FFA Convention. Four categories, Star in Agricultural Placement, Star in Agriscience, Star in Agribusiness and Star Farmer, were awarded. Students from across the country competed for this honor. Sixteen students were selected as finalists from the American Degree application progress, yet only four walked away with the high honor of being named a Star. Here's a closer look at the finalists



Star in Agricultural Placement Finalists

➤ **Christopher Duchsherer** has been farming since he was 4 years old when he would drive his uncle's tractor down the field. Ever since that time he has loved agriculture. The 21-year-old Minot, N.D., resident has held several jobs that have attributed to his award contention. He began his agricultural experience working for the same uncle that he drove a tractor for as a young boy. Duchsherer Farms is a 1,500-acre grain, oil crop and corn farm. The farm also raises 250 commercial beef cattle for calving and sells excess hay to producers in eastern Montana. As an employee at Duchsherer Farms, he was responsible for checking the animals, repairing equipment and fence and operating machinery.

When Duchsherer was a junior in high school, he took an internship at Dakota Agronomy Partners, as a part of a hands-on learning class. This agribusiness offers products such as seed, chemicals and fertilizer. They specialize in chemical and fertilizer application, delivery and in soil testing. As an intern, Duchsherer served in many roles. He worked in the fertilizer plant and warehouse, before learning how to fill the trucks with fertilizer and test soil. Once his internship was completed, he was asked to stay on as a part-time employee and took on even more responsibilities such as scouting the field for pests and hauling grain.

When Duchsherer enrolled at North Dakota State University, he began working at Dakota Ag Cooperative (DAC), where he is still employed today. At DAC, he works within the grain division, hauling loads of grain between satellites and terminal. He also assists the management team, making decisions that affect the company's efficiency.

He is the son of Edward and Melanie Duchsherer and is a member of the Minot FFA Chapter, where his advisors are Lance Van Berkomp, Tracey Hartwig and Jeff Ball. Recently, Duchsherer graduated from North Dakota State University with a degree in agribusiness. Upon graduation, he entered grad school, where he is pursuing a degree in agribusiness and applied economics.


➤ **Devin Miller** believes he was born to be a fifth generation farmer and rancher. He grew up on the farm working with cattle and being outdoors.

Miller is an employee at Miller Cattle Co., a large cattle and wheat operation. The ranch runs more than 3,000 head of cattle on 5,000 acres of wheat ground and grass. The 22-year-old is fourth in seniority and holds five percent of the equity. His major responsibilities on the ranch include working and caring for the wheat pasture cattle, tractor operation and maintenance, plowing and drilling wheat, building terraces, construction of dams and ponds, and maintenance of facilities and fences. In addition to his farming responsibilities, Miller has remained an active FFA member. He served as both chapter sentinel and president, received numerous awards, including Chapter Star Farmer and multiple proficiencies. He was awarded the state Diversified Ag Production Entrepreneurship and Beef Production

Entrepreneurship proficiencies and was gold ranked nationally in both areas.

The Mooreland, Okla., resident also received a scholarship from the National FFA Organization to attend Tulsa Welding School, where he has continued his education, earning his Master Welder certification. This degree has helped the farm immensely when there are machinery breakdowns or when there are corrals to be built or repaired.

He is the son of Darrell and Sally Miller and is a member of the Mooreland FFA Chapter where his advisor is John Kinney.

 **Brock Peters'** first experience with dairy cattle came when he was a freshman in high school. He joined the Dairy Cattle Judging team and began learning all he could about the industry.


The 21 year old is a full time herdsman at Meier Dairy, Inc. near Palmer, Kan. When he began working at the dairy in 2000, his responsibilities included manual labor tasks like feeding the cows, milk production, general maintenance and waste hauling. Curious of how the industry works, Peters began learning all he could about dairy cattle and how their body systems work.

"I think that the dairy cattle industry has a promising future and I could see myself becoming an owner/operator someday down the road," the Linn, Kan., resident said. He certainly has enough hands-on experience to make that goal a reality.

As a fulltime herdsman at Meier Dairy, he is responsible for the breeding program, herd health, calf management, vaccinations and waste management control. He oversees the milking of 600 cows a day. In addition, the farm has 70 dry cows, 40 spring heifers and 250 calves. As a herdsman, Peters receives a full time salary with a benefits package and paid vacation.

He is the son of Bryce and Gaye Peters and is a member of the Linn FFA Chapter. His advisors are John Kern and Trenton Horn.

Star in Agribusiness Finalists

 At the young age of 14, **Brendon Lowe** of Chickasha, Okla., began his hay hauling business as a way to earn money for college.

The 19-year-old Chickasha FFA member owns Lowe Brothers Hay Hauling with his younger brother. The agribusiness involves the loading, unloading and/or transporting of small square hay balls. When they started this business in 2001, they only transported hay for a few farmers, with the help of their father. As the young men grew older, their clientele grew too. They now haul for 13 customers and travel within 40 miles of their home. They are also hired by horse farms to transport hay from the barn to their hay shed during winter months to provide income in the "off-season".

Lowe has learned along the way that with the vast opportunities that come with owning your own business, a few hardships are sure to follow. One challenge he and his brother have had to face is machinery breakdowns.

"We have discovered that breakdowns usually occur when two or three customers have hay in the field and rain is in the forecast." To avoid these set backs, Lowe has sharpened his listening and observation skills to detect a problem before it occurs. He has also become quite a knowledgeable mechanic.

Lowe is the son of Dick and Judy Lowe and his FFA advisors are Mike Stephens, Shirley Stephens and Steve Clark. He is currently attending Eastern Oklahoma State College, majoring in agricultural business. After college he hopes to become an agricultural lending officer so he may help others achieve their dreams of owning their own agricultural business.

It seems to **Benjamin Polzin** that ever since he was born, he's been outside. He loved everything about the outdoors from day one: the animals, plants, rain and the general feeling it gave him. Polzin owns Monkey Business Nursery, a thriving business that compliments his father's company, Monkey Business Services. The nursery specializes in unique and unusual plants that are hardy to the area. Polzin began his entrepreneurship at the age of 12, when he started his own lawn mowing business. As his business grew, he became more interested in his craft, attending workshops and classes that related to his business. In addition to owning his own nursery, he is the leading manager of the family's landscaping company.

Aside from his thriving businesses, Polzin has remained active in his FFA chapter. The Cadott FFA member served his chapter as secretary and then president. He was named the state and national Diversified Horticulture Proficiency award winner and was named the 2003 Wisconsin Star in Ag-Placement.

Polzin has many goals for his thriving business. He plans to continue the growth and expansion of it, adding new product lines and continue to always carry the more unique and new plants available. Next year he plans to start construction on a new building to include a mechanical shop, design area and offices.

He is the son of John and Sandi Polzin of Cadott, Wis., and his FFA advisor is Leigh Siegmund. Polzin attends Lakeland College, where he is majoring in business management.

Devin Varner has been driving tractors for as long as he can remember. Before he could reach the pedals, he spent many hours steering from his father or grandfather's lap. Now, the 21-year-old Delta, Colo. resident has turned that love of tractors into a business that has earned him a lot of money.

Varner has made a business of buying and selling used equipment. His inventory includes tractors, skid-loaders, backhoes and other farm equipment. He began this business at the age of 11 when he used the money earned from his 4-H animal projects to buy a John Deere "B". His original plan was to restore the tractor, but soon found that this was an expensive endeavor. Instead, he sold it, but lost \$400 in the process. Varner didn't let the loss of money detour him and he soon bought another tractor and resold it.

With land provided by his father, Varner displays equipment he has bought. Many times he is required to make a few mechanical adjustments on the machinery before he can resell it, like fixing oil leaks, clutches and starters. These small repairs can add up to big money when it comes time to re-sell the equipment. Due to his reputation and advertising, he has brought buyers in from Minnesota, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

Varner hopes to add more product lines to his dealership and expand his sales into new territory. He hopes to expand his inventory to trailers, semis and vehicles. Varner is currently attending Delta Montrose and Wyoming Technical, where he is pursuing a degree in Diesel Mechanics. He is the son of Dan and Holly Varner and a member of the Delta FFA Chapter where his FFA advisor is Jerry Allen.

Star in Agriscience Finalists

Stephen Fuchs' family was having a problem with their chicken hatchery. Some of the pullets appeared to have their down completely missing. In hopes of finding a way to correct this defect, the Cameron, Texas native has developed a research project that may win him top honors. For the last three and a half years, Fuchs has conducted genetic experiments to try to produce normally downed chickens. He used a genetic line of Rhode Island Red chickens to conduct the study. He hoped to identify roosters that produced all normally downed chicks. He selected 32 chickens to test and mated each male with 5 hens. He then evaluated the hatched eggs for the clubbed down defect. Through his research, Fuchs was able to determine that sire selection is a highly effective way to eliminate the defect.

Aside from his research, the 21-year-old is a very active FFA member. He was a member of the Poultry Career Development team for all four years of high school, winning the Texas Poultry Contest in 2005 and receiving second place in the National Poultry CDE. He served as chapter reporter from 2003-2005 and was named the Chapter Star in Agriscience. In 2005, Fuchs was the National Runner-Up in the Agriscience Student competition. Fuchs currently



attends Texas A&M University, where he is studying Poultry Science. He hopes to pursue a doctorate in poultry genetics and work for a poultry breeding organization before returning to the family business. He is the son Gary and Susan Fuchs and is a member of the Cameron Yoe FFA Chapter where his advisors are Carl Tomascik and John Templeton.



➤ **Dale Miemietz** has always had a love of being outdoors – hunting, fishing, four-wheeling and horseback riding. Through his love, he developed a research project that may now win him a prestigious award. The 21-year-old Independence, Wis., native's interest in natural resources began when he started stocking trout and fish structures in local streams and assisting landowners in planting trees. At that time, he didn't even realize that the things he was doing was making an impact on the environment. As an avid hunter, he was assisting with wildlife management. Soon, he grew more interested and learned how to perform population estimates on deer herds and determine how large of a population a habitat can support. He also performed other studies on population, as well as herd health. Recently, Miemietz took an internship with the City of Independence, working on the Bulge Lake Restoration Project. This is a multi-million dollar restoration project that will restore a local millpond. He is responsible for performing soil and water tests, planning and evaluation, conducting public information meetings, writing grants, conservation education and promotion. "This internship has given me the opportunity to repay this community by giving back a very important aspect of it by allowing me to use all the skills I have gained with the assistance of this community," commented Miemietz.




Miemietz has an Associates Degree in general resource management from the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point and a certification in equine reproduction from Colorado University. He is the son of Ann Miemietz and the late Gerald and is a member of the Independence FFA Chapter. His advisor is Brad Sirianni.



➤ When **Paul Ruddle** was challenged to compete in the Public Speaking Career Development Event as a middle school student, he chose a topic that would spark his interest in research – an interest which may now win him top honors. The 19-year-old began his research four years ago comparing transgenic and non-transgenic standard plants. Specifically, he focused on Monsanto's Round-Up Ready lines of corn, cotton and soybeans. In his research, Ruddle evaluated for differences in photosynthesis rates using the standard plants as the control and the transgenic plants as the experimental group. The Lowndes High FFA member conducted the first stage of his research in his high school greenhouse, before moving on to Agriculture Research Service lab in Tifton, Ga. This is not the first time Ruddle has reaped the rewards of his experimental research. In 2004 he was named the National Agriscience Student of the Year, after placing first in the Georgia State Agriscience Fair four times. He has also been awarded the Georgia Institute of Technology Environmental Biology Award as well as a University of Georgia Foundation Scholarship. Additionally, Ruddle competed in the National Extemporaneous Public Speaking Career Development Event in 2005, where he received a silver award.

Currently, he attends the University of Georgia, dual majoring in applied biotechnology and genetics. Following graduation he will complete a two-year mission with his church and then continue through graduate school and earn a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Plant Biology. He is the son of Paul and Carmen Ruddle and his FFA Advisors are Dr. James Corbett, Claudea Paul, Andy Harrison and Spencer Taylor.


Star Farmer Finalists

 Growing up on her family's fifth-generation farm, 21-year-old **Ruth Bobbitt** of Lamont, Okla., laid the foundation for a life in production agriculture.

When Bobbitt was encouraged by her parents, Michael and Cindy Bobbitt, to become involved with their family farming operation, she jumped at the opportunity. Today, her SAE program consists of 207 acres of rotational cropland – a combination of wheat, milo, corn, soybeans, sunflowers and haygrazer, in addition to seven acres of hay meadow. Bobbitt also raises registered Red Angus cattle and a flock of registered Dorset breeding ewes. “The experience I've received first hand by leading an active farm life has definitely proven to be an advantage in my agricultural endeavors,” said Bobbitt. This experience has transcended into her FFA career. “The first thing I received from my ag instructor was a record book. Now, as a junior in college, I have come to realize that this is the biggest learning tool I ever received.” Bobbitt's record keeping skills have allowed her to track her individual SAE programs so she knows exactly where her profits and losses occur. The income she has received from her SAE has allowed her to partner on the purchase of 240 acres of land; 42 of which are enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program.

Bobbitt is currently attending Oklahoma State University, pursuing an honor's degree in agricultural communications with a minor in agricultural economics. It is her career goal to serve rural America as an agricultural journalist, before returning to the farm full time to carry on the family business.

“I will always maintain my involvement in production agriculture and will be an advocate for that agricultural industry.” Bobbitt is a member of the Deer Creek-Lamont FFA Chapter and her FFA Advisor is Tommy Wilkerson.


 As long as he could remember, **Joseph Erdenberger** of Glen Haven, Wis., was playing with small tractors and pretending to farm. Now, as an adult, he is no longer pretending, as he and his older brother are the principle owners of their family farm.

Erdenberger was raised on a diversified livestock and crop farm in southwest Wisconsin. At the age of six he went into partnership with his older brother and bought four calves. As he grew, so did his operation, and soon he was raising 20 calves a year. At the age of 11, he began making major decisions concerning the family farm and learning quite a bit about production agriculture. When Erdenberger was just 14, his father passed away.

“This led me to some important decisions that put me in the position that I am in today,” said the 21-year-old River Ridge FFA member. Now, Erdenberger's responsibilities on the operation include fertilizer application, seedbed preparation, planting, spraying, harvesting and feeding programs. In the future, he hopes to diversify the farm, by renting more acres and incorporating Global Positioning Systems into the operation.

Erdenberger currently attends Southwest Wisconsin Technical College, majoring in computer programming and will graduate in 2006. He is the son of Lynette and the late William Erdenberger and his FFA advisor is Peter Drone.

Erdenberger's program led him to apply and earn the American FFA Degree, in which a student must earn and invest \$7,500 or have earned and productively invested at least \$1,500 and worked 2,250 hours in excess of scheduled class time.

 **Alesa Ann Raasch** played an active role in agriculture from an early age. She resides on a sixth-generation family farm in Norborne, Mo., where she has experienced first hand what she considers to be the American Dream.

Raasch's SAE program began in 2000 when she planted 20 acres of soybeans. However, her production agriculture career started many years ago when she began raising chickens and showing pigs. Raasch now has 180 acres of corn and 240 acres of soybeans and soon after entering college she bought 160 acres of hill land to begin a commercial cattle operation. She currently owns 30 head of Charlois cattle. In addition to her farming, in 2005 Raasch worked as a chemical sales intern at Dow Agro Sciences.

Raasch has seen success both in and out of the field. After becoming interested in making jellies and jams, and developing her grandmother's old fruit trees, grape vines and raspberry bushes that were not being utilized, she was named a finalist in the National FFA Fruit Production Proficiency. Raasch used this as a major stepping-stone in her career, and it gave her a lot of confidence for projects to come.

A student at the University of Missouri-Columbia, Raasch is majoring in agronomy with minors in agricultural economics and animal science. Her career goal is to return to the family farm upon graduation and form a partnership with her father and fiancé. She hopes to increase her cattle operation and expand her pastureland.

"Hopefully within the next five years I will be taking the steps to building my own family in hopes of leaving the family farm to my children." Raasch is a member of the Norborne FFA Chapter and her FFA Advisor is Brenda Smith. Her parents are Frank and Lesa Raasch.

NATIONAL FFA TALENT: OUR STANDARD OF ENTERTAINMENT

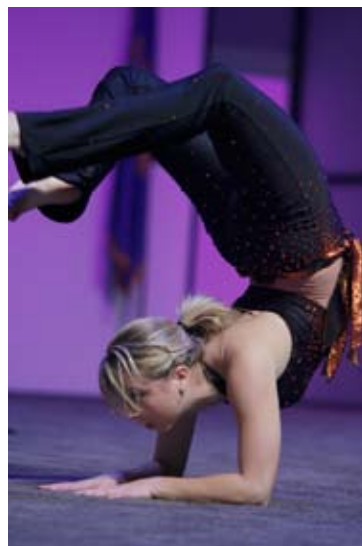
The 79th National FFA Convention was the spot to see more than 70 FFA members strut their stuff. Performers, ranging from soloists to bands, entertained not only thousands of FFA members from across the nation but also the city of Indianapolis. In addition to the FFA Shopping Mall, members of national talent performed at the Indianapolis City Market and the Indianapolis Arts Garden.

Once selected to be a part of the national FFA talent program, the members get to perform during convention sessions, special banquets and evening concerts. They represent the best of the best in dancing, singing and strumming. Members of the national talent play an integral role by providing motivation, enthusiasm and patriotism to the convention.

"Once I found out that I got to be a part of the National FFA Talent Program, I was extremely excited!" said Sam Plummer of the New Auburn, Wisconsin FFA. "Now being here, and working with the national FFA staff, it's awesome! I would recommend this experience to anyone. Go for it, there's no harm in trying!"

Another way of showcasing talent is the National FFA Convention Talent Revue. Thursday of convention provided the opportunity for attendees to witness the powerful talents of FFA members. It was a moving experience dedicated to the accomplishment of the dreams FFA members possess in making it big in the entertainment industry.

Finding your voice, that perfect note, or that incredible dance move while in the company of friends is nothing compared to a performance in front of 30,000 FFA members at the National FFA Convention. Just imagine: From the shower to the stage – next year it could be you!





NATIONAL FFA BAND

Anna Chlebowski
Katharine Bartlett
Tiffany Baxter
Jill Bomgaars
Danielle Fiebelkorn
Ashley Bonney
Bridget Breitbach
Julienne Burns
Kendra Grupe
Carley Cherry
Elizabeth Colvin
Jacklyn Cornelis
Amanda Hall
Gretchen Ettredge
Tricia Harlan
Elizabeth Everman
Amanda Semrinec
Ashleigh Holley
Chelsea LaJoye
Sarah Knutson
Courtney Davis
Stephanie Dorn
Katie Eastman
Megan Haraf
Marie Hauge
Wendy Slater
Elizabeth Miller
Chelsie Shaw
Corrina Heimbuch
Hayden Hemphill
Amanda Hoover
Kayla Ketterling
Nicole Kohlmann
Caitlyn Long
Megan Micklos
Victoria Miller
Angie Schroder
Lindsey Neby
Leah Ruff
Amber Tempel
Desiree Morehouse
Amanda Sparks
Paige Walker
Brandon Clemons
Adam Ash
Joshua Looper
Arthur Bohlmann
Robert Courter
Wyatt Dyer
Benjamin Fischl
Rodney Harter
Patrick Crone
Ryan Covey
William Logsdon
Sean Bauder
Glenn Dennis
Alex Higgins
Carson Letot
Ryan Davies
Randy Dziedzic
Joshua Marek
Milo Mell
Thomas Moore
Austin Owens
Stanton Nelson
Jerod Nieveen
Andrew Riquier
John Spiegelberg
Michael Wagnon
Michael Spiegelhauer
Kevin Wieringa
George (Jim) Wetzell
Benjamin Wieman
Jacob Wilhelm
Austin Wills

NATIONAL FFA CHORUS

Kaylie Ackerley	Joseph Nepodal
Lacey Aldrich	Heidi Nollette
Seth Balla	Austin Openshaw
Chris Bauerle	Brittany Pacha
Jaide Baugh	Jenita Qualm
Jessica Bawdon	Emilie Records
Kalli Best	Megan Reeves
Andrew Beyer	Lindsay Riblett
Lynnae Bigler	David Salinas
Ethan Bosserd	Deanna Schiles
Hannah Bowder	Amy Senffner
Daniel Bulling	Sarah Skrip
Rachelle Buuck	Betty Sowell
Brandon Callis	Megan Statler
Edith Caver	Leah Statler
Saffron Clark	Marcus Sutter
Dalon Coder	Anna Ukele
Alysia Coles	Justin Ulmer
Adam Crocker	Benjamin VanMoer
Scott Deis	Jeremy Waugh
Zanessa Dodd	Megan Wecker
Jordan Ehlers	Morgan Whinery
Miles Essay	Nicholas Whittington
Katharine Fantegrossi	Lauryn Williams
Jena Flak	Sydney Wright
Chelsie Flipse	Dana Yutz
Kristia Ford	Samuel Zoulek
Stephanie Fossand	Melody Rose Aldarondo
Ethan Fry	Brittany Armatage
Cedric Gaines	Emma Campbell
Logan Gauby	Eldon Campbell
Shelly Glover	Kelsey Fletcher
Lora Gonzalez	Alex Higgins
Gregory Hamilton	Ashley Morris
Michael Hansen	William Nichols
Joseph Hefner	Evan Robb
Jacob Hoffman	Mark Samson
Rebekah Howdyshell	Allison Smith
Ryan Hulin	Renee Voelker
Caitlin Jenkins	KayDee Bailey
Karlynn Kapels	BaileyPhillips
Seth Kennedy	Kayci Allen
Michael Koglin	Consuelo Espinoza
Sarah Lemaster	Samantha Helmick
Katelin Long	Jorden Howard
Laura Machmer	Sheena Huckabee
Ryan Mallen	Emily Lasher
Cindall Marsh	Rachel Lasher
Tyler Massey	Alisoun Luckey
Bryan Mathis	Dwayane Perez
Marcus McAtee	Jessica Sherwood
Andrew Meadows	Roseanna Sonnenfeld
Suzannah Mellinger	Dalton Trana
Megan Milke	Megan Westhoff
Seth Moore	
Jenny Mosier	

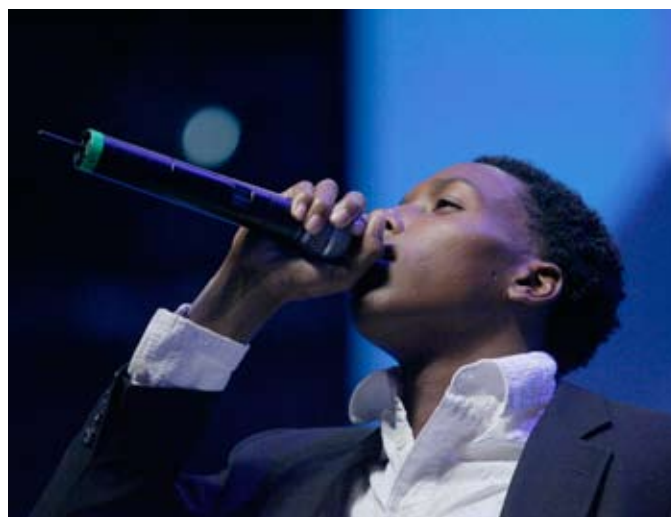
FFA Chorus hits the right note in Indianapolis

Eighty-eight FFA members made up the very first national FFA chorus to sing on the stage in Conseco Fieldhouse at the 79th National FFA Convention. The amount of time these talented groups of students spend together proves to be more than just singing, "The best part of this whole process is coming together and forming a nice little family," said Indiana FFA member and first-time chorus member Rachelle Buuck.

Conducted under the long-time direction of Patti LaJoye, the choir performs at the majority of the convention sessions as well as a talent concert prior to the seventh general session.

Janita Qualm from Nebraska said, "That standing on that stage in front of everyone makes you feel almost invincible and it is a feeling like no other."

Along with singing on the main stage during the national event, the choir gave a welcoming song to those dignitaries attending the Weclome Lunch on Tuesday, Oct. 24. Vocals could also be heard throughout the downtown area of Indianapolis, as choir members sang at the Arts Garden in Circle Centre Mall and City Market in downtown Indianapolis.



FFA Presents H.O. Sargent Diversity Awards

CALIFORNIA TEENAGER HONORED FOR PROMOTING DIVERSITY



The National FFA Organization presented its national-level H.O. Sargent Diversity Award to Ashley Darm, a member of the Elk Grove FFA chapter in Elk Grove, Calif.

The honor was presented onstage at the 79th National FFA Convention on Friday, Oct. 27. The award recognizes an FFA member who develops and/or actively supports ways to reach underrepresented individuals or groups who have not been able to fully enjoy the benefits of agricultural education and FFA activities. Each of the three remaining finalists received a plaque and onstage recognition during the convention.

During the past year, Darm volunteered in a variety of organizations that helped increase her awareness of gender and age differences, as well as mentally-disabled youth and adults. One of her key activities is Project R.I.D.E. (Riding Instruction Designed for Education), a program that builds individual confidence and aids in achievement for physically and mentally disabled students and adults through a therapeutic horseback riding/grooming program.

Darm is the daughter of Bordan and Beverly Darm. Her FFA advisors are Mike Albiani and Warren Weaver.

EDUCATOR PROMOTES DIVERSITY THROUGH AGRICULTURE



The National FFA Organization presented the H.O. Sargent Diversity Award at the 79th National FFA Convention. The winning teacher received the award during an on-stage ceremony on Oct. 27. The honor recognizes those who have achieved and promoted diversity through agricultural education and FFA. The recipient of the 2006 Teacher H.O. Sargent Diversity Award was Robn Krueger of Sinton, Texas.

Throughout the past year, Krueger has helped bring her mainstream students and her special needs students closer together through the use of agricultural education programming. Through activities such as Farm Day, where students cleaned up the school farm, and a deep-sea fishing trip, students learned to work together for a common good. Regardless of their backgrounds students learned during each activity that they had skills necessary to help one another solve problems.

Krueger received a \$250 cash award and a gift certificate for FFA educational materials.

The H.O. Sargent Diversity Award was an honor given by the New Farmers of America (NFA), the former organization for African-American agriculture students, before NFA was incorporated into the FFA in 1965. This award continues as an annual recognition program and is sponsored by Monsanto as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

NATIONAL CHAPTER AWARDS

During the 79th National FFA Convention, chapters across the nation, competed for the honor of being a Model of Innovation winner. Three-star gold chapters competed for the honor in three main divisions: chapter development, and student and community development. A top middle school chapter was also named.

The chapters who received the honors received a plaque in an on-stage ceremony during the convention's second general session.

Chapter Development

The **Sterling FFA Chapter of Sterling, Colo.**, was named the Model of Innovation winner in chapter development. The Sterling FFA Chapter promotes leadership among members by attending the Made for Excellence (MFE) conference. During the conference members build confidence as they define how to live a life of excellence by building a foundation of talent, skills and will power to persevere.

During the chapter's annual membership auction/oyster fry, the members of the Sterling FFA Chapter are auctioned off for a full day of work. The Sterling FFA Chapter promotes exceptional financial management and earnings by utilizing the chapter resources such as the members and local businesses. All 41 members participated in the event, giving almost 330 hours of labor to local businesses.

Community Development

The **Ponchatoula FFA Chapter of Ponchatoula, La.**, was named the Model of Innovation winner in community development.

When Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast in August of 2005, it left many families without homes and many students without much needed school supplies. Following the natural disaster, the chapter sprang into action. Receiving donations from chapters in Arkansas and Texas, the chapter purchased 300 backpacks and supplies and distributed them to area school districts. Soon word spread of the Chapter's efforts, and through promotions on RFD-TV, Nickelodeon and Channel One, donations poured in from all 50 states, giving the chapter enough funds to distribute 46,000 backpacks to more than three hundred schools in the hurricane affected region.

Student Development

The **Columbus FFA Chapter of Columbus, Texas**, was named the Model of Innovation winner in student development. In the Columbus FFA Chapter, money is not an obstacle in participating in FFA activities. Thanks to their "FFA Credit Program," members earn money to pay their dues, purchase jackets or fund their supervised agricultural experience. Through the program, students earn 10 credits per hour worked, equaling one dollar per credit. They earn these credits by staffing an alumni concession stand at school events or working other alumni events.

When first-year members earn their Greenhand degrees, they have their hands dipped in green paint to show their Greenhand pride. They attend school for the entire day with their hands painted.

For six years, chapter members have been a part of the Agriculture in the Classroom program. This program, sponsored by the Farm Bureau Association, aims to educate youth about the importance of agriculture in their community and around the world. Chapter members demonstrate leadership skills by planning lessons about the diverse world of agriculture and teaching them to third-graders.

Middle School

The **Fort White Middle School Chapter of Florida** was named the National Middle School Chapter Models of Innovation award winner.

To promote Breast Cancer awareness, members instituted the "Tough Enough to Wear Pink" campaign. Students worked hard to sell books of cooker tickets and collect change during lunch breaks. The chapter raised \$600 dollars for the Breast Cancer Awareness campaign.

Toyota and the Land 'O Lakes Foundation sponsor the Models of Innovation awards as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. It is one of many ways FFA members accomplish the FFA mission and succeed in making a difference in their communities and the lives of their fellow students.

TOURING THE HALL OF STATES

A visit to the Hall of States proved to be educational as well as nutritious for many attendees this year. Where else could you sample cheese from one state, top it off with an apple from another, and learn something about agriculture in 37 states and Puerto Rico?

The National FFA Organization this year added a special incentive for the states, the newly created Best State Presentation.

Hunter Olds, FFA member and Chapter President from Goshen, Ala., said many visitors to his state's booth were curious about how peanuts and cotton grow. "They asked whether cotton grows on trees and if peanuts grow above ground or under it. We helped them understand our state's products."

Visitors to the Connecticut booth were surprised to learn that tobacco is one of the main commodities of the Constitution State, generating more than \$1 billion annually. Working the booth was Andrea Cassella, FFA member from Southington, Conn., who was experiencing her first national FFA convention and enjoying it thoroughly. "I've met a lot of wonderful people here," she said. "I love it," she added, "it's great!"

Tommy Kiselica, FFA member from Cazenovia, N.Y., had to explain to visitors that New York is much more than just the city known as "The Big Apple." He told them, "New York is more country than city," and he had the agricultural facts to back up his claim.

The California FFA Association constructed a small cow to represent their state's leadership in dairy production. The small Holstein heifer, covered with black spots, was made of unusual materials such as pencil steel and wrapped using the same special technology that is used to make floats for such parades as the Rose Bowl. The spots were then colored with black pencil led. To illustrate the white of the heifer the students used white daises.

Drew Palacio of the Quartz Hill/High Desert FFA chapter said, "The preparation for the cow took a little over a month and half to prepare in California and was shipped from there to the convention through special corporate sponsorships." When the cow finally arrived at convention, it took another day and half to prepare it and the booth.

Manning the booth along with Palacio early Tuesday morning were his sisters Aimee and Alisha Nelson, of the same chapter. Down the hall from California, and representing the opposite coast sat the Connecticut FFA Association booth.



Association members quizzed visitors that stopped by the booth about the role of Horticulture in Connecticut: "How long is the average Connecticut greenhouse?" they asked. (Answer: One mile.)

California, which won the Best State Presentation Award for its booth, boldly and creatively told its story using uncommon art supplies, such as crushed rice, rosemary, curry and other homegrown agricultural products. FFA member Cathy Simpkin from Quartz Hill, Calif., said, "We're number one with the largest association membership," as she proudly pointed out the various displays that proclaimed California as the "#1 Agricultural State."

While the Hall of States showcased America's agricultural strength, it also spotlighted the spirit and drive of the newest generation of FFA members to honor our country's most precious heritage.



The following FFA associations participated in the Hall of States

Alabama FFA Association
Alaska FFA Association
Arkansas FFA Association
California FFA Association
Connecticut FFA Association
Delaware FFA Association
Illinois FFA Association
Indiana FFA Association
Kentucky FFA Association
Louisiana FFA Association
Maryland FFA Association
Massachusetts FFA Association
Michigan FFA Association
Mississippi FFA Association
Missouri FFA Association
Montana FFA Association
Nebraska FFA Association
Nevada FFA Association
New Hampshire FFA Association
New Jersey FFA Association
New York FFA Association
North Carolina FFA Assoc.
North Dakota FFA Association
Ohio FFA Association
Pennsylvania FFA Association
Puerto Rico FFA Association
Rhode Island FFA Association
South Carolina FFA Assoc.
South Dakota FFA Association
Tennessee FFA Association
Texas FFA Association
Utah FFA Association
Vermont FFA Association
Virginia FFA Association
Washington FFA Association
West Virginia FFA Association
Wisconsin FFA Association
Wyoming FFA Association

TERRY BRADSHAW KICKS OFF CONVENTION SESSIONS

"I believe in everything you do. I believe that you should have everything you dream of," exclaimed Terry Bradshaw, the keynote speaker of the opening session of the 79th National FFA Convention. "You will reap tomorrow what you sow today. It might as well be darn good stuff!"



Terry Bradshaw is the co-host and analyst for "Fox NFL Sunday" and is a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. His message for FFA members focused on one simple solution to live happily – find your smile early in life. "It's been my experience that I need to start everything I do with a smile – my day, every speech," Bradshaw said after his speech. "It helps me get through my day."

Bradshaw also encouraged FFA members to be happy, smile, motivate others and be who you are. "In today's world, people want things done yesterday. We are all wanting to hurry up, and it's all about me, me, me," he said. "One good person can have an impact on several people, and FFA is leading the way."

Bradshaw concluded that he chose to speak at the national FFA convention because the FFA members have an amazing energy that he rarely encounters at other speaking venues. "This [convention] is a huge deal!" he said. "Young people are a great audience, and this one is a unique experience. Being involved in agriculture earlier in life, I have an understanding of what hard work goes into their lives. These young people love animals, crops and good, hard work outside. Everyone is so different and that inspires me."

Bradshaw's admiration of FFA members goes beyond their hard work and dedication to agriculture. "These are solid human beings," he stated. "These young people are not in the newspaper for negative things. They are in there for their values and respect that they have for the community. This is the heartland of America. This is what we want for our future!"

He admires FFA so much that Bradshaw asked for a member to send up "a 52 extra long jacket." As one made its way to the convention stage, he challenged FFA members to develop a deep foundation embedded with family connections and personal values. "The deeper your foundation, the higher you will go in whatever you do," he said. "Especially in the FFA, you can go as high as you want. It's up to you!"



At last, after several attempts, a lucky Wisconsin FFA member's jacket and tie was a perfect fit for Bradshaw's six-foot-three-inch frame. Taking a cue from convention theme, "Blue Jackets, Gold Standards," Bradshaw connects the blue FFA jacket with strength and respect that FFA members personify.

Finally, the former quarterback asked FFA members to find their purpose in life. "You just need a reason to get out of bed," he encouraged. "If you have no purpose in life, you will have no fulfillment, no reward. You need a reason to endure!"

Following the speech, FFA members gave a rousing standing ovation and very much enjoyed hearing such a great opening session keynote address. Scott Quaintance from the Clyde, Ohio FFA chapter thought that the talk was very inspiring. "The speech was great! Terry got me very motivated to go out and find my purpose and to always strive for the best day everyday!"

CLARK KELLOGG: OUR STANDARD OF EXPERIENCE



For the first time, the 79th National FFA Convention welcomed CBS sports analyst, Clark Kellogg. "I am blown away," he said. "You have no sense of something until you experience it yourself. This convention is amazing!"

During the fourth general convention session, Kellogg opened his speech by challenging FFA members to take control of their lives. According to the former Indiana Pacer, there are two aspects of life that are in our control – attitude and effort. "We fall in to the trap of letting what we do define who we are," stated Kellogg. "The things we do are just small parts of who we are. We need to define ourselves by our attitudes and efforts."



Attitude, Kellogg defined, is the humility of our lives. The recognition of our own opportunities in controlling our own attitude is the key to humility. "Don't allow anyone else define or make you do anything you don't want to do," he explained. "No one can make you mad. They can lead you to disliking, but only you have the power to look negatively and be mad."

Getting the reward is based upon what kind of effort we put into something, according to The Ohio State University graduate. Kellogg also challenged FFA members to take their efforts on the high road. "Seek higher ground, because even if you fall short, you are still progressing," he described. He related effort to the old metaphor of reaping what we sow. "Once we sow thoughts, we reap actions," he clarified. "When we sow our actions, we reap habits. Then when we sow our habits, we reap characteristics." When we do this, we are developing the skills that it takes to control our efforts. "With the excellence you've shown here in FFA, you are already on that track."

The once Most Valuable Player in the Big Ten Conference received a grand ovation when he concluded the talk. "It was awesome to see a fellow 'Buckeye' speak to us," said Abby Snyder of the Zane Trace, Ohio FFA chapter. "He inspired us to really take the initiative in taking control of our lives. He was great!"



Blue jackets, gold standards, and Clark Kellogg – three experiences that made the 79th National FFA Convention a success.

SCOTT MCKAIN: OUR STANDARD OF PRIDE

The National FFA Organization welcomed back a former FFA member and Hoosier to conclude the 79th National FFA Convention. “Everything that I have accomplished all started from the greatest youth organization on the earth – FFA,” said ninth general session keynote speaker, Scott McKain. The former National FFA Officer accredits the organization to his lifetime of successes.

McKain, a former member of the Crothersville, Indiana FFA chapter focused his keynote address about celebrating life, not missing out on the good “stuff” and being persistent. According to the best-selling author, we do not directly reap what we sow; rather, we are always using our experiences to exponentially harvest greater successes.

However, McKain also alluded to the fact that this is not an easy task. “There are so many excuses,” he explained. “Too many people are willing to give up. Now you have a choice to make: You can get better, or give up. I wanted to get better.” In a story that he shared, McKain said that he participated in the prepared public speaking career development event as a freshman. After months of preparation, he lost the competition. For the next three years, he made his goal to win at the state level. After several attempts, and several losses, he was finally at his senior year in high school preparing for his speech. He waited for the results and realized that he had come in last. His advisor offered the words of giving up or getting better. “To this day, I have never forgotten those words that he said to me,” McKain reflected. “Now I ask you...will you give up or get better?”

Following the cue of the theme, “Blue Jackets, Gold Standards,” McKain displayed his own national officer jacket. “Wearing this jacket was the best year of my life,” he commented. “I can’t believe that I am back here and speaking to all of you.” When he received the phone call to speak at the national FFA convention, McKain said that it was a dream come true to come and speak on the big stage. “I make my living on my words, but now they are escaping me,” he said looking out into the crowd of more than 10,000 FFA members.

McKain concluded his address with his favorite poem, “Tomorrow.” “...but the fact is he died and he faded from view,” he recited, “and all that he left here when living was through was a mountain of things he intended to do...tomorrow.” Afterward, the crowd gave an emotional standing ovation that moved the speaker to tears. “I wrote a list of the fifty things I wanted to do before I died, and speaking at the national FFA convention was number one on my list,” he said. “Everything is a result of FFA. I just wanted to let FFA members know that they can do it, too...just don’t give up!”



GUITAR VIRTUOSO INSPIRES THROUGH SONG



"What if" and "why not?" Those are the two questions that keynote speaker Mike Rayburn asked of all FFA members at the seventh session of the 79th National FFA Convention.

Rayburn said asking yourself "what if?" opens up all possibilities. Asking yourself "why not?" gets you to the obstacle that is holding you back.

Rayburn, award-winning guitar virtuoso, used his astonishing guitar talent to put a different twist to everyday songs, while motivating FFA members to think differently and to look at life from a different perspective.

"I want people to think differently and to not change for the sake of change, but to change for the sake of improvement," the entertainer said.

He was voted "America's Campus Entertainer" three times in four years. Rayburn has played the guitar for 36 years and draws from life experiences to motivate crowds to aim high and turn their own problems into opportunities. He said that the guitar is the best way to illustrate something that he is passionate about.

"To change anything at all, the first thing we have to change is our brain and the way we think," he said. He encouraged FFA members to pay attention to what their brain is asking. Rayburn explained, when asking yourself what if and why not, a fundamental change takes place. "Your brain will no longer look for reasons why you can't, but your brain will begin to look for reasons why you can."

He took on the personas of different musicians and incorporated humor into his message to FFA members. The audience heard his impression of Led Zeppelin singing Dr. Seuss' "Green Eggs and Ham," Jim Hendrix singing "Green Acres," and Bob Marley singing like Garth Brooks. FFA members at the session laughed hysterically, sang along and shouted out their own requests.

Between songs, Rayburn said that he believes there is a gold mine of unrealized potential in everyone. He explained to FFA members that they are surrounded everyday by moments to access that potential. "I have discovered that the biggest challenges you will face in your life will hit you when you are not ready for them," he said.

He told FFA members that we motivate ourselves by rewards and punishments. "This is also the way we train rats," he said. "What sets humans apart is our ability to respond to the greatest motivations." Rayburn also said that we have a sense of purpose which puts meaning behind everything we do.

"What I want you to take from here today is to draw from that purpose, draw from that sense of why you are here, ask your self 'what if and why not' and then act on those possibilities." He wants FFA members to be able to look back at themselves later on in life and know that they stood for something and that they made it count.

By keeping those two questions in mind, Rayburn wants everyone to look at their problems as possibilities and to aim higher than just the middle. "Aim higher than mediocrity," he said.

"It's great getting to talk to people at a younger age. I'm inspired by what they [National FFA Organization] stand for, and the positives and the importance of what FFA members are learning," said Rayburn.



Agricultural Mechanics

Sponsored by the Firestone Agricultural Tire Division/Bridgestone Firestone Trust Fund of Des Moines, Iowa as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This event gives students the opportunity to apply what they have learned in their mechanics classes to real-life situations. Activities included in the event are a written exam, a team activity, a demonstration of problem-solving skills and hands-on performance practicums. Areas of emphasis include energy systems, environmental/natural resource systems, machinery and equipment systems, structural systems and industry and marketing systems. Each team in the event has competed with other chapters in their state for the privilege of participating in the national event.

Winning Team: Christopher Perry, Kyle Eckler and Kevin Shively, all of North Shelby H.S., Mo.

High Individual: Christopher Perry of North Shelby H.S., Mo.



Agricultural Sales

Sponsored by Monsanto of St. Louis, Mo., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The event includes actual sales presentations, a written exam, a team sales situation, an individual practical situation focusing on customer relations, customer service, or prospecting for customers. Each team competed at local and state levels for the privilege of representing their state at the national FFA convention.

Winning Team: Alicia Guerra, Julisa Astle, Stacey Jacobson and Amanda Marquez, all of Bear River H.S., Calif.

High Individual: Amber McGuire of Sumner H.S., Wash.



Agronomy

Sponsored by Bayer CropScience of Research Triangle Park, N.C., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This event allows students to apply classroom knowledge to real-life job activities as an agronomist. Participants' knowledge of agronomic sciences is tested through several levels of competition including developing solutions for problematic scenarios, identification of seeds, insects, soil and crops, and other management practices.

Winning Team: Jason Reichert, Elizabeth Gunn, Jordan Harmon and Chris Sterling, all of Brunswick H.S., Mo.

High Individual: Chris Sterling of Brunswick H.S., Mo.



Creed Speaking

Sponsored by CHS Foundation of St. Paul, Minn., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This event is designed to recognize outstanding FFA members for their ability to present the National FFA Creed in a competitive setting. Members deliver the creed from memory and respond to three questions. The event gives FFA members the opportunity to develop their ability to communicate in a powerful, organized and professional manner.

High Individual: Tyrel Meader of Sandy Union H.S., Ore.



Dairy Cattle Evaluation

Sponsored by WestfaliaSurge, Inc. of Naperville, Ill., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This competitive event tests the student's ability to select and manage quality dairy cattle. Event components include six classes of dairy cattle, linear classification of five Holstein cows, a sire selection and dairy management exercise and placing of four dairy animal pedigrees. Each team competed at local and state levels to earn the privilege of representing their home state at the national FFA convention.

Winning Team: Kim Wilson, Scott Wilson, Eva Russell, and Dalton Coberly, all of Neosho R-V H.S., Mo.

High Individual: Logan Horst of James Buchanan H.S., Penn.



Dairy Foods

The Dairy Foods event is sponsored by Dairy Farmers of America of Kansas City, Mo., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

This competitive event allows students to prove their knowledge about the recognition, selection and management necessary for quality dairy foods. Participants must complete a written exam on milk production and marketing, evaluate milk samples for flavor and quality, identify cheeses, evaluate milk sediment pads and milker parts for defects and distinguish dairy and non-dairy products. Each team competed at local and state levels to earn the privilege to represent their state at the national FFA convention.

Winning team: Cassie Ramm, Heather Critelli, Samantha Stephenson and Kara Wullenkord, all of Florence H.S., Texas

High Individual: Heather Critelli of Florence H.S., Texas



Environmental/Natural Resources

Sponsored by USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service of Washington, D.C., and Smithfield Foods of Smithfield, Va., as a special project of The National FFA Foundation.

This event focuses on testing students' problem solving and decision making skills in environmental and natural resources. These areas concentrate on soil profiles, water and air quality, waste management, environmental analysis and use of global positioning units. Each team competed at local and state levels for the privilege of representing their home state at the national FFA convention.

Winning Team: Noel Williams, Erin McFarland, Jeffrey Doan and Daphne Kraft, all of Sumner H.S., Wash.

High Individual: Zach Stucker of Oldham County H.S., Ky.

Extemporaneous Public Speaking

Sponsored by the American Farm Bureau Federation of Washington, D.C. as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This event is designed to recognize outstanding FFA members for their ability to prepare and present a factual speech on a specific agricultural issue in a well thought out and logical manner. Members select one topic from a choice of categories, have 30 minutes to prepare a four to six minute speech and respond to five minutes of questions following delivery.

High Individual: Amanda Nolz of Mitchell H.S., S.D.



Farm Business Management

Sponsored by John Deere of Moline, Ill., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This event is designed to test the ability of students to apply economic principles and concepts in analyzing farm and ranch business management decisions. Each team in the event has competed with other chapters in their state for the privilege of participating in the national event.

Top Team: Kyle Ross, Steven Johnson, Brittney Shaull and PJ Mahaffey, all of Montezuma H.S., Iowa

High Individual: Brittney Shaull of Montezuma H.S., Iowa



Floriculture

Sponsored by Ag Workers Mutual Auto Insurance of Fort Worth, Texas; American Floral Endowment of Glen Carbon, Ill.; and Ball Horticultural Company of West Chicago, Ill.

In this event FFA members test their knowledge and skills in the production and retailing of flowers, plants and foliage. Participants must complete a general knowledge exam on the floriculture industry, identify plant materials and demonstrate problem solving/decision making skills, employment and customer service skills, technical floral skills and the ability to work as a team. Teams competed at the local and state levels to earn the privilege of representing their home state at the national FFA convention.

Winning Team: Wesley Corder, Dustin Ritter, Matt Swaim and Brandon Smith, all of Eastern Randolph H.S., N.C.

High Individual: Matt Swaim of Eastern Randolph H.S., N.C.



Food Science and Technology

Sponsored by Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc. of St. Joseph, Mo., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This event is designed to test a student's basic knowledge of food science as well as the student's ability to apply this knowledge to practical situations. Each team participates in a timed team product development project, and each individual participates in practicums involving food sensory evaluation and food safety and sanitation.

Winning Team: Jared Aden, Ty Schurr, Kallie Craig and Jaimee Easterday, all of Eustis-Farnam H.S., Neb.

High Individual: Jaimee Easterday of Eustis-Farnam H.S., Neb.



Forestry

Sponsored by Husqvarna of Charlotte, N.C., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This event tests students' skills and knowledge in the area of forest management. Event components include a general forest knowledge exam, tree and equipment identification, map interpretation and compass practicum. Each team competed at local and state levels for the privilege of representing their state at the national FFA convention.

Winning Team: Jennie Fagen, Max Herndon, Will Leonard and Nic Stoltzfus, all of Blountstown H.S., Fla.

High Individual: Dan Newberry of Jefferson County H.S., Georgia



Horse Evaluation

Sponsored by American Quarter Horse Youth Association of Amarillo, Texas; Dodge Trucks of Auburn Hills, Mich.; Evergreen Mills, Inc. of Ada, Okla.; and KENT Feeds, Inc. of Muscatine, Iowa as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This competitive event tests the student's ability to select and evaluate horses. Event components include eight selection classes that consisted of four halter classes and four performance classes. Students also give four sets of oral reasons with two sets coming from each evaluation class. Each team competed at local and state levels for the privilege of representing their state at the national FFA convention.

Winning Team: McKenzie Nygren, Meghan Wooldridge, Tyrone Cardona and Candace Spreng, all of Roosevelt H.S., Colorado
High Individual: McKenzie Nygren of Roosevelt H.S., Colo.



Job Interview

Sponsored by Tractor Supply Company of Brentwood, Tenn., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This competitive event tests student's ability to perform effectively throughout the entire job application process. The participants prepare resumes, cover letters, complete a written application and write a follow up letter. They also participate in phone, one-on-one and panel job interviews as part of the competition.

High Individual: Elizabeth Heitkamp of Versailles H.S., Ohio



Livestock Evaluation

Sponsored by Alpharma of Fort Lee, N.J.; Boehringer Ingelheim of St. Joseph, Mo.; and Merial of Duluth, Georgia as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This competitive event tests the student's ability to select and evaluate livestock. Event components include seven evaluation classes of beef, sheep and swine; oral placement reasons on four classes; a written exam on livestock production; and quality grading of slaughter cattle. A team event, based on production performance records, demonstrates the team's breeding livestock selection ability. Each team in the event competed at local and state levels for the privilege of representing their state at the national FFA convention.

Winning Team: Chelsea Clifton, Darin Annuschat, Logan Pritchett and Mark Pringnitz, all of Kingfisher H.S., Okla.
High Individual: Chelsea Clifton of Kingfisher H.S., Okla.



Marketing Plan

Sponsored by DeBruce Grain of Kansas City, Mo.; DTN of Minneapolis, Minn.; DuPont Company of Wilmington, Del.; and USDA-Rural Development of Washington, D.C., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This event helps students practice and sharpen skills in marketing through the development and presentation of a marketing plan. The plan may focus on the introduction of a new agricultural product, supply, or service or on improving marketing of an existing product, supply or service. Each team competed against chapters in their state for the privilege of participating in the national event.

Winning Team: Matias Roybal, Garrett Chavez and Arcenio Lujan, all of Robertson H.S., New Mexico



Meats Evaluation and Technology

Sponsored by Cargill Meat Solutions of Minneapolis, Minn.; Hormel Foods Corporation of Austin, Minn.; Kraft Foods Inc.-Oscar Mayer Division of Madison, Wis.; and Premium Standard Farms of Kansas City, Mo., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This is a competitive event that tests students' skills and competencies in evaluating and identifying meat carcasses and products. Event components include a general knowledge exam, beef carcass evaluation, identification of wholesale and retail cuts of beef, lamb, and pork, quality and yield grading of beef carcasses, a team meat merchandising activity and solving of a meat formulation problem. Each team has competed at the local and state levels to earn the privilege of representing their state at the national FFA convention.

Winning Team: Ben Ehlers, Chance Masaichy, TraeAnn Schlemmer and Sean Gallagher, all of Riesel H.S., Texas
High Individual: TraeAnn Schlemmer of Riesel H.S., Texas

Nursery and Landscape

Sponsored by Ayrsta LifeScience North America of San Francisco, Calif., Kubota Tractor Corporation of Torrance, Calif., and STIHL Inc. of Virginia Beach, Va., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

In this competitive event, FFA members test their knowledge and skills in nursery practices and landscaping. Participants must complete a general knowledge exam testing horticultural principles including plant anatomy, production, marketing, turf, landscape design and maintenance. Each participant must also complete practicums involving a landscape drawing, landscape estimating, plant propagation or potting, identification of plants, disorders and equipment. Each team competed at local and state levels to earn the privilege of representing their state at the national FFA convention.



Winning Team: Jason Douglas, Chris Hart, Bray Harvey and Clay Phillips, all of Chatham Central H.S., N.C.
High Individual: Clay Phillips of Chatham Central H.S., N.C.

Parliamentary Procedure

Sponsored by Syngenta of Moneta, Va., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This event tests students' ability to efficiently and effectively communicate ideas during a business meeting. Components included a general knowledge exam of parliamentary law, a ten minute demonstration of parliamentary procedure, oral questions and written minutes of the demonstration. Each team competed against chapters from across the nation.

Winning Team: Chris Turner, Courtney Jones, Blair Chism, Amanda Bough, Stephanie Tucker and Johnathan Brasher, all of Stockton H.S., Mo.



Poultry Evaluation

Sponsored by Tyson Foods, Inc. of Springdale, Ark.; and U.S. Poultry & Egg Association of Tucker, Georgia as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This competitive event tests the student's ability to select top quality poultry and poultry products needed for successful production and marketing. Event participants must complete a written exam on poultry management, evaluate classes of live birds for eggs and meat production, evaluate quality of eggs and evaluate and identify parts and products. Each team competed at local and state levels for the privilege of representing their home state at the national FFA convention.

Winning Teams: Kyle Sells, Andrew Brietzke, Joshua Garcia and Charlotte Salinas, all of LaVernia H.S., Texas

High Individual: Charlotte Salinas of LaVernia H.S., Texas



Prepared Public Speaking

Sponsored by Arysta LifeScience North America Corporation of San Francisco, Calif.; New Dominion Management of Shawnee Mission, Kan.; and Vector Marketing-Cutco Cutlery of Wilmington, Del., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This event is designed to recognize outstanding FFA members for their ability to prepare and present a factual speech on a specific agricultural issue in a well thought out and logical manner in a competitive setting. Members prepare and deliver a six-to eight-minute speech from memory and respond to five minutes of questions. The event is just one way FFA members can develop their ability to communicate in a powerful, organized and professional manner.

High Individual: Kari Boettcher of Hermiston H.S., Ore.



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL PROFICIENCY WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Winners in the National Agricultural Proficiency Awards Pageant were announced Friday, Oct. 27 at the 79th National FFA Convention. Awards were given in 50 categories.

Agricultural Communications—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Ellie Titus—California

Ellie Titus keeps agricultural issues at the forefront of the local newspaper. She started writing feature stories with the newspaper that serves a readership of 5,000. Ellie is a member of the Ferndale FFA Chapter in California. She plans to attend Stanford University and major in international relations and communications. Ellie's FFA advisor is Benjamin McWhorter. The award is sponsored by Farm Progress Companies, Inc.

Agricultural Education—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Erin Croy—Missouri

Growing up around FFA and agricultural education encouraged Erin Croy to become a voice for agriculture. She participates in a program called Students as Teachers where she works in the classroom with teachers. Erin is a member of the Gallatin FFA Chapter and is currently attending the University of Missouri-Columbia majoring in agricultural education. Her FFA advisors are Dennis Croy and Chris Henderson. This award is sponsored by The James F. Lincoln Arc Welding Foundation and The Lincoln Electric Company.

Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Eric Larson—Idaho

Eric Larson was interested in welding and put his skills to use by fabricating two flat bed trailers. He also works at a local fabrication shop building truck beds and trailers. Eric is a member of the Burley FFA Chapter in Idaho. He plans to attend UTI and pursue a career in fabrication. Eric's FFA advisors are Lex Godfrey and Sam Condie. This award is sponsored by Carry-on Trailer Corporation and Dodge Trucks.

Agricultural Mechanics and Energy Systems—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Jared Unrau—Kansas

Jared Unrau works on the family farm repairing and maintaining the farm machinery. His duties include welding, torching, electrical wiring, and hydraulic work. Jared is a member of the Goessel FFA Chapter in Kansas. He plans to attend Hutchinson Community College and study agricultural technology management and agricultural diesel mechanics. Jared's FFA advisor is Justin Schrag. This award is sponsored by New Holland.

Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance—Entrepreneurship

Tyson Griesse—South Dakota

Tyson Griesse built his SAE by restoring a 1949 John Deere tractor and operating a small engine repair business. He has 17 regular customers and continues tractor restoration projects with his father. Tyson is a member of the Harrisburg FFA Chapter in South Dakota. He plans to attend Southeast Community College in Nebraska and study to be a John Deere technician. His FFA advisor is Todd Marks. The award is sponsored by the National FFA Foundation.

Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance—Placement

Chance Simpson—Oklahoma

Chance Simpson has been working in agricultural mechanics since he was in the eighth grade. He has worked for P & K Equipment and gained valuable mechanics experience. The company sponsored him to attend the John Deere Agricultural Technology program. Chance is a member of the Timberlake FFA Chapter. He is currently enrolled at Garden City Community College pursuing a degree in agricultural technology. Chance's FFA advisor is Keith Dillingham. The award is sponsored by Hobart Welding Products and Tractor Supply Company.

Agricultural Processing—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Kurt Ellis—Ohio

For three generations, Kurt Ellis's family has been making cheese. Kurt is involved in manufacturing, cutting and packaging a variety of cheeses. He focuses on Swiss and Colby cheese varieties and has taken on more responsibility for the Colby production line. Kurt is a member of the Ridgewood FFA Chapter and plans to major in food science and nutrition at Ohio State University. His FFA advisor is Suzie Hoop. The award is sponsored by Archer Daniels Midland Company and CHS Foundation.

Agricultural Sales—Entrepreneurship

Ben Alsum—Wisconsin

Ben Alsum began his SAE raising and selling Holstein heifers for local farmers. He has expanded his operation to sell animals statewide. Ben purchased a bull and also owns a semen tank. He buys feed from his father and is completing training on dairy breeding. Ben is a member of the Randolph Cambria-Friesland FFA Chapter and plans to complete the Farm and Industry Short Course at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His FFA advisor is Keith Gundlach. The award was sponsored by Chevrolet and GMAC.

Agricultural Sales—Placement

Dale Cruzan—New Jersey

Working at Marlboro Farm Market and Garden Center has allowed Dale Cruzan to experience many aspects of the retail nursery industry. He helps with customer relations and assists with the spring and Christmas plant sales. In addition, Dale helps cultivate and care for the plants. He is a member of the Cumberland FFA Chapter and plans to attend Cook College, Rutgers University to study landscape design. Dale's FFA advisors are Michael Griffith and Nichol Carroll. The award is sponsored by Tractor Supply Company and Vigortone Ag Products.

Agricultural Services—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Courtney Sedbrook—Wisconsin

Courtney Sedbrook began her SAE working in a taxidermy studio. She has learned to flesh deer heads, mount turkey tails and tan hides. Courtney now helps customers by fletching arrows and does finishing touches on many of the mounts. She is a member of the Brodhead FFA Chapter and plans to attend Blackhawk Technical College and major in nursing. Courtney's FFA advisor is Jillian Beaty. The award is sponsored by New Holland.

Aquaculture—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Samantha Calaway—Wisconsin

Samantha Calaway began raising perch to increase the size of fillets. She and her family dug ponds to raise the perch and installed two indoor tanks. Samantha maintains and cares for the ponds including pest control. She is a member of the Pulaski FFA Chapter in Wisconsin. Samantha plans to pursue a career in wildlife biology. Her FFA advisor is Jared Schaffner. The award is sponsored by Land O'Lakes and Purina Mills.

Beef Production—Entrepreneurship

Alex Brookhouser—Nebraska

Alex Brookhouser manages and cares for 22 head of registered Angus cows. He has emphasized improving his herd through artificial insemination and breeding to high performance bulls. Alex is a member of the Plainview FFA Chapter in Nebraska. He plans to attend the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and pursue a degree in agribusiness. Alex's FFA advisor is Chad Kment. The award is sponsored by Bayer Animal Health LLC and Nasco Division-Nasco International, Inc.

Beef Production—Placement

Kelsey Pfeiffer—Oklahoma

Kelsey Pfeiffer works on the family beef operation. He helps manage 500 commercial cows and 100 registered cows. The operation also has 2,000 stocker cattle. Kelsey is involved in vaccinating, breeding and record keeping as well as the nutrition. He is a member of the Mulhall-Orlando FFA Chapter in Oklahoma. Kelsey plans to attend Okla-

homa State University. His FFA advisor is Allen Miller. The award is sponsored by Ariat International, Inc., Fort Dodge Animal Health, Midwest Precision Molasses Supplements and Pfizer Animal Health.

Dairy Production—Entrepreneurship

Josh Haese—Wisconsin

Josh Haese owns 135 Jersey cows. He also jointly owns 85 head, which he milks and manages with his father. He owns equipment, which helps him operate his enterprises efficiently. Josh is a member of the Brillion FFA Chapter in Wisconsin, and he plans to study dairy and agronomy at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. His FFA advisor is Gordon Gasch. The award is sponsored by DeLaval, Inc. and Pfizer Animal Health.

Dairy Production—Placement

Jessica Tekippe—Iowa

Jessica Tekippe milks cows, feeds calves and bales hay at Sun Valley Farms. She also keeps the reproductive records of the animals. Jessica serves on the Delaware County Dairy Council and assists in local dairy promotion efforts. She is a member of the West Delaware FFA Chapter in Iowa. Jessica is currently attending Iowa State University pursuing a degree in dairy science. Her FFA advisor is Tammy Schnieders. The award is sponsored by Monsanto.

Diversified Agricultural Production—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Dan Palmquist—South Dakota

Dan Palmquist raises cattle, corn, soybeans and alfalfa on the family farm. He started planting soybeans and spraying the crops. Now Dan helps in the decision-making process for seed selection and marketing crops. He is a member of the McCook Central FFA Chapter in South Dakota. He is attending Mitchell Technical Institute and pursuing a degree in agricultural technology. Dan's FFA advisor is Terry Rieckman. The award is sponsored by Delta Consolidated – A Danaher Company.

Diversified Crop Production—Entrepreneurship

Adam Venteicher—Nebraska

Adam Venteicher raises hay, corn, soybeans and rye on approximately 60 acres. He rents equipment from his father and is responsible for planting, spraying, cultivating and baling. In addition, Adam uses the hay for his beef operation. He is a member of the Pierce FFA Chapter in Nebraska. He plans to pursue a degree as a diesel mechanic and expand his farming operation. Adam's FFA advisor is Jodi Borchers. The award is sponsored by CHS Foundation.

Diversified Crop Production—Placement

Emilie Magnus—Kansas

Emilie Magnus has harvested wheat, milo, soybeans and hay in her work for L&M Harvesting. Her responsibilities have increased as Emilie uses machinery such as the swather, baler and grain trucks. She is a member of the Arkansas City FFA Chapter in Kansas. Emilie plans to attend Kansas State University and major in agribusiness. Her FFA advisors are Cory Epler, Denise George and Adam Foster. The award is sponsored by American Farm Bureau Insurance Services Inc., National Crop Insurance Services and Rain and Hail LLC.

Diversified Horticulture—Entrepreneurship

Eric Hildreth—Tennessee

Eric Hildreth has gained valuable experience in the nursery and landscape business. He started by raising 750 white dogwoods. He markets them through the family landscaping business. Eric leased 30 acres to grow his stock. He is a member of the Warren County FFA Chapter in Tennessee. Eric is attending Tennessee Technological University and majoring in horticulture. His FFA advisor is Russell Watson. The award is sponsored by Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Company and Nationwide Foundation.

Diversified Horticulture—Placement

Shane Suber—Georgia

Shane Suber began his SAE working for a lawn care company. He gained a variety of experiences from installing landscapes to cleaning gutters. Eventually he was hired as the design horticulturist for a business that coordinates weddings and other formal events. Shane is a member of the Perry FFA Chapter. He plans to attend the University of Georgia and pursue a degree in horticulture. Shane's FFA advisors are John Wood and Argene Claxton. The award is sponsored by the National FFA Foundation.

Diversified Livestock Production—Entrepreneurship

Trevon Ogden—Missouri

Trevon Ogden began his SAE with 15 cows and one horse. Since then he has purchased 250 nanny goats to help with brush control on the family ranch. Trevon also bought a Great Pyrenees dog to protect and manage the goats. He is a member of the Lockwood FFA Chapter. He plans to pursue a career in production agriculture and continue with his current operation. Trevon's FFA advisor is Brian Gillen. The award is sponsored by Five Rivers Ranch Cattle Feeding LLC and Tractor Supply Company.

Diversified Livestock Production—Placement

Candice Curry—Colorado

Candice Curry works at a custom feed yard that handles two 2,000 head of cattle. She also helps foal 25 mares each year. Candice helps process cattle in the feedlot, and she also identifies sick animals and determines treatment for them. She is a member of the McClave FFA Chapter in Colorado. Candice is currently attending Colorado State University in the veterinarian program. Her FFA advisors are Donald Thorn and Terry Weber. The award is sponsored by Zareba Systems.

Emerging Agricultural Technology—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Kaleb Santy—Wisconsin

Kaleb Santy conducted research on bacterial strains as part of a Somatic Cell Count Reduction project. He was working at a dairy when somatic cell counts spiked, and as a result, he began his research. Kaleb works to identify the bacteria that is inhibiting milk quality. He is a member of the Pulaski FFA Chapter and plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and major in agricultural education and biotechnology. Kaleb's FFA advisor is Jared Schaffer. The award is sponsored by Chevrolet, ISK Biosciences Company and Micro Flo Company.

Environmental Sciences and Natural Resources—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Amy Robak—Minnesota

Amy Robak works for the Benton County Soil and Water Conservation. She helps landowners develop plans to protect their natural resources. Amy started as a volunteer and was soon hired to help create digital maps and lay out shelter belts for landowners. She is a member of the Foley FFA Chapter in Minnesota and plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and major in conservation. Her FFA advisor is Alan Stemper. The award is sponsored by Ford Trucks.

Equine Science—Entrepreneurship

Dustin Cullip—Virginia

Dustin Cullip began his SAE providing equine services including breaking and training horses. He expanded his enterprise to including farrier services. Dustin currently shoes and trims 10 horses each week and has 40 customers. He is a member of the Pulaski FFA Chapter and plans to attend Murray State University and major in agricultural business. Dustin's FFA advisors are Mike Cox, Jennie Lyons, Laura Grove and Tim Dalrymple. The award is sponsored by Land O'Lakes Feed/Purina Mills and Red Brand Non-Climb Horse Fence – Made by Keystone Steel & Wire Company.

Equine Science—Placement

Kally Hood—Kansas

Kally Hood works with world-champion halter horses at Kevin Hood Show Horses. She helps breed, train, fit and show Paint horses. Kally gives riding lessons and teaches others how to show their horses. She also has developed her skills banding horses. Kally is a member of the Rock Creek FFA Chapter in Kansas. She is majoring in agricultural business at Kansas State University. Kally's FFA advisor is David Holliday. The award is sponsored by Tractor Supply Company.

Fiber and/or Oil Crop Production—Entrepreneurship/Placement

David Carr—Ohio

David Carr started his SAE renting 11 acres from his father to raise soybeans. He expanded his operation and now rents 176 acres from a neighbor. David has increased his production to 47 bushels per acre. He is a member of the Miami Trace FFA Chapter in Ohio. David plans to pursue a degree in agribusiness and expand his farming operation. David's FFA advisors are Tracy Dendinger and Bruce Bennet. The award is sponsored by Helena Chemical Company and Syngenta Seeds, Inc.

Floriculture—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Casey McDonnal—Missouri

Casey McDonnal built a successful SAE arranging flowers at Angel Wings Flowers and Gifts. She assists customers and maintains online orders. She has increased her responsibilities to include designing floral arrangements. Casey is a member of the Cameron FFA Chapter in Missouri. She plans to attend Central Missouri State University and study human biology. Casey's FFA advisors are Carmen Webb and Wes Strange. The award is sponsored by the National FFA Foundation.

Food Science and Technology—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Sara Wilke—Minnesota

Sara Wilke's first science project was researching taste buds where she identified three different categories. Sara is trying to identify specific proteins that would allow marketers to create products for niche markets with specific tastes. She is a member of the Agricultural and Food Sciences Academy FFA Chapter in Minnesota. Sara is currently attending the University of Minnesota pursuing a career in research and technology. Her FFA advisors are Stephanie Wohlhuter, Jeremy Daberkow and Nathan Russell. This award was sponsored by the CHS Foundation and Seneca Foods Corporation.

Forage Production—Entrepreneurship/Placement

North Carolina—William Walker, Jr.

William Walker, Jr. began his forage production SAE by selling the excess hay from his family's operation. The hay sales quickly increased and have become a large part of his income. William has increased responsibilities and has taken over many aspects of the operation. He is a member of the North Iredell High School FFA Chapter in North Carolina. He is attending North Carolina State University and pursuing a degree in agricultural education. William's FFA advisors are Douglas Prevette and Vaughn Sprinkle. The award is sponsored by Claas of America, Inc., Gehl Company and Unity Seeds.

Forest Management and Products—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Cal Evans—Montana

Cal Evans built an SAE around selecting and cutting trees to turn into buildings and furniture. He started with wood preparation including sanding, staining and peeling logs. Now Cal is an experienced carpenter and he scribes logs, chinks walls and builds log trusses. He is a member of the Shields Valley FFA Chapter in Montana. Cal is attending WyoTech pursuing a career as a diesel technician. Cal's FFA advisor is Jim Rose. The award was sponsored by Dodge Trucks and John Deere.

Fruit Production—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Michael Manson—Missouri

Michael Manson began his SAE working on a local pecan and watermelon farm. He has developed skills in grafting trees, harvesting and cleaning the pecans. Michael helps maintain 3,200 pecan trees and he oversees the pecan cleaning and cracking lines. He is a member of the Brunswick FFA Chapter in Missouri. Michael plans to study agricultural economics and plant science at the University of Missouri-Columbia. His FFA advisor is Tom Zeilstra. The award is sponsored by DuPont Company.

Grain Production—Entrepreneurship

Robert Parrish—Oklahoma

Robert Parrish began his SAE with a two-thirds crop share agreement with his aunt. He now operates 85 acres of wheat. He is responsible for tillage, planting, fertilizing and harvesting. Crop sharing helps to reduce capital investment and maximizes his profits. Robert is a member of the Pond Creek-Hunter FFA Chapter in Oklahoma. He plans to attend Oklahoma State University and pursue a degree in agronomy. His FFA advisor is Larry Berg. The award is sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc.

Grain Production—Placement

Shane Blaes—Kansas

Shane Blaes works on his family's 2,500-acre no-till operation. They raise wheat, milo, corn and soybeans. Shane's current duties include drilling wheat and beans, driving seed trucks and operating grain carts. He is a member of the Cherryvale FFA Chapter in Kansas. Shane plans to pursue a degree in agronomy. His FFA advisor is Amy Allen. The award is sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc.

Home and/or Community Development—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Jonathan Pitts—California

Jonathan Pitts developed an interest in fire science and became a seasonal worker with the California Department of Forestry. He presents fire safety seminars to the community and local schools. Jonathan is attending a fire science academy to increase his knowledge. He is a member of the Nevada Union FFA Chapter. Jonathan plans to pursue a degree in business management at Chico State University before pursuing a career in fire fighting. His FFA advisors are Karen Henderson, Jim Drew and Katie Alling. The award is sponsored by Carhartt, Inc.

Landscape Management—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Cole Knehans—Missouri

Cole Knehans has built a successful SAE with his own landscaping business. He currently has more than 30 clients. Cole offers a variety of services including lawn care, mulching, planting, aerating and building retaining walls. He is a member of the Higginsville FFA Chapter in Missouri. Cole is pursuing a degree in turf grass management and landscape design at Central Missouri State University. His FFA advisor is Melisa Bertz. The award is sponsored by MTD Products Inc. and Tractor Supply Company.

Nursery Operations—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Julie Chelewski—Colorado

Julie Chelewski began her SAE working at a tree farm and the local nursery. She also has experience at the school greenhouse and has conducted a research project on hydroponically grown lettuce. She prepares all of the greenhouse plants for sale in the spring. Julie is a member of the Rifle FFA Chapter in Colorado. She plans to attend Colorado State University and study food science and agricultural education. Julie's FFA advisor is Leon Handhardt. The award is sponsored by Dodge Trucks and Landmark Nurseries, Inc.

Outdoor Recreation—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Scott Skelly—Wisconsin

Scott Skelly has built a successful SAE designing and cutting corn mazes for farmers around the world. His first maze attracted 500 visitors; now, it has more than 10,000 people visit each year. Scott has published a book detail-

ing steps to developing a successful corn maze. He is a member of the Janesville Parker FFA Chapter in Wisconsin. He plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and major in agribusiness and journalism. Scott's FFA advisor is Steven Redenius. The award is sponsored by GM Powertrain and Justin Brands.

Poultry Production—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Jarrett Hall—Georgia

Working in the family broiler operation, Jarrett Hall helps with all aspects of the operation. The birds they raise are under contract to Pilgrim Pride Farms. In addition, Jarrett has purchased his own poultry farm and 60 acres. He is a member of the Franklin County High FFA Chapter in Georgia. Jarrett plans to continue growing and expanding his poultry operation. His FFA advisors are Gary Minyard and Owen Thomason. The award is sponsored by Chore-Time Equipment Division of CTB Incorporated and Wayne Farms LLC.

Sheep Production—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Adam Heishman—Virginia

Adam Heishman began his SAE with two bottle lambs. He gained experience with Dorset and Hampshire breeds and now has nearly 250 animals. Adam has used his stock to help others get started in the sheep industry. He is a member of the Central FFA Chapter in Virginia. Adam plans to attend Virginia Tech and study animal nutrition. His FFA advisors are Sherry Heishman and Dana Fisher. The award is sponsored by LA-CO Markal.

Small Animal Production and Care—Entrepreneurship

Kelsey Peirce—California

Kelsey Peirce began her SAE raising Havanas rabbits. She has expanded her operation into a two-barn rabbitry with three different breeds. Kelsey breeds Netherland Dwarfs and New Zealand Whites in addition to her Havanas. She is a member of the Grass Valley-Nevada Union FFA Chapter in California. Kelsey plans to study government policy and law at Cal Poly. Her FFA advisors are Karen Henderson, Jim Drew and Katie Alling. The award is sponsored by the National FFA Foundation.

Small Animal Production and Care—Placement

Ryan Duclos—California

Ryan Duclos was hired by the County Division of Animal Services to teach basic obedience and agility to shelter dogs. He is also involved in temperament testing. In addition, Ryan works at a grooming facility for dogs and cats. He is a member of the Morro Bay FFA Chapter in California. Ryan plans to attend Northern Oklahoma Community College and major in agricultural business management. His FFA advisor is Pete Zotovich. The award is sponsored by Merial.

Specialty Animal Production—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Megan Wright—Texas

Megan Wright started her SAE with two Boer nanny goats. She has expanded her herd to 25 nannies. She has been able to sell some of the kids and cull nonproductive nannies. Megan is a member of the Falls City FFA Chapter. She is attending Texas A&M University studying agricultural leadership and development. Megan's FFA advisor is Brett Wright. The award is sponsored by Land O'Lakes Feed/Purina Mills.

Specialty Crop Production—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Ben DeTar—Kansas

Renting 20 acres from his father, Ben DeTar began growing block oil sunflower seed for birdseed. He has expanded his operation and now grows confectionary sunflowers for human consumption. Ben is a member of the Cherryvale FFA Chapter in Kansas. He plans to attend Missouri State University and major in agronomy. Ben's FFA advisor is Amy Allen. The award is sponsored by the National FFA Foundation.

Swine Production—Entrepreneurship

Christopher Perry—Missouri

Christopher Perry began his SAE raising sheep but later converted his operation to swine. He started with 10 Hampshire gilts and used artificial insemination to expand his operation to 15 breeding gilts. Christopher is a member of the North Shelby FFA Chapter. He hopes to study animal science at the University of Missouri. Christopher's FFA advisor is Harold Eckler. The award is sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health.

Swine Production—Placement

Krista Anderson—California

Krista Anderson gained experience with swine production by working on her family's swine operation. She started feeding the animals and has increased responsibilities to include management decisions for breeding, animal selection and record keeping. Krista is a member of the Escalon FFA Chapter in California. She plans to study agricultural communications at Oklahoma State University. Her FFA advisors are Jennifer Terpstra and Stacy Ingalls. The award is sponsored by Akey/Sunglo Feeds and Phibro Animal Health.

Turf Grass Management—Entrepreneurship

Brad Naebeck—Michigan

Brad Naebeck began his own lawn care business when he was 12. With the local cemetery as his first client, Brad has expanded to nine accounts. In addition, he also works as a lawn crew leader for a lawn care contractor. Brad is a member of the Saline FFA Chapter in Michigan. He plans to major in commercial turf grass management at Michigan State University. His FFA advisor is David Mellor. The award is sponsored by John Deere.

Turf Grass Management—Placement

Brian Lee—Nebraska

Brian Lee began his SAE in turf grass management by working at the local country club. Brian is responsible for mowing the greens and fairways and also fertilizing. He also helps to maintain the equipment. Brian is a member of the Imperial FFA Chapter in Nebraska. He plans to attend the University of Nebraska and pursue a degree in agricultural business. Brian's FFA advisors are Randy Vlasheen and Jason Speck. The award is sponsored by the National FFA Foundation.

Vegetable Production—Entrepreneurship/Placement

Bryan Sheller—Wisconsin

Bryan Sheller helps his family manage 300 acres of onions, carrots, peppermint and soybeans. He maintains the equipment, helps with the field work and is responsible for sorting the vegetables. Bryan is a member of the Montello FFA Chapter in Wisconsin. His future plans include farming full-time with his family. Bryan's FFA advisor is Brian Hendrickson. The award is sponsored by Briggs and Stratton Corporation Foundation Inc.

Wildlife Production and Management – Entrepreneurship

Maverick Bingham—Utah

Maverick Bingham began his SAE with 250 Ringneck pheasant chicks and 250 Chucker partridge chicks. He has increased his production to around 5,000 birds. Maverick now raises Reeves pheasants in addition to other species. He is a member of the Lehi FFA Chapter. Maverick plans to pursue a degree in agricultural business after his church mission. His FFA advisors are Brett Robertson, Nathan Bushman and Lisa Hadfield. The award is sponsored by Cabela's and Land O'Lakes Feed/Purina Mills.

Wildlife Production and Management – Placement

Zach Carter—Georgia

Zach Carter is a wildlife trapper with the State Nuisance Alligator Agency. He has learned how to handle alligators by working with his father. Zach relocates the nuisance alligators to new habitats. He is a member of the Charlton County High FFA Chapter in Georgia. Zach is attending Waycross College and studying biology. His FFA advisor is Chad Crews. The award is sponsored by Bass Pro Shops Inc. and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

RETIRING ADDRESSES

Anita Estes

National FFA Central Region Vice President

“The Difference”

Ah, yes, a small town. My small town, Stuart, Nebraska, isn't even really a small town. With 625 people, it's actually classified as a village! My graduating class at Stuart Public School had 29 students; that included our two foreign exchange students, and believe it or not, we were the largest class in the school. No, I didn't date any of the boys in my school...I was related to half of them and the other half, well; let's just say Dad would not have approved!

From Stuart, it's 30 minutes to the closest McDonald's, two hours to the nearest shopping mall, and the popular thing to do on Saturday night is start at one end of Main Street, drive to the other, make a U-turn, and drive back the opposite way...repeatedly. The greatest part about this past time is that there isn't a single stop light in town. Generally, people choose not to use their blinkers, but that's perfectly okay because everyone already knows where you're going!

Even with all of the small town jokes, the people of Stuart really take pride in our community. Kids grow up learning about the importance of faith and respecting others; and it's a place where the hard work that farmers and ranchers do is appreciated. There are many values I learned from the people in my hometown. Wherever we grow up, big town or small, the people there have a tremendous impact on who we become.

For me, it was Mr. Ludwig who could make anyone enjoy history because of his passion for it. It was Jeff Wallinger's family who dropped everything to help with a community or church event. It was Connie Weichman who took time each Christmas to bake and deliver pumpkin bread to the neighbors.

It was the people in tiny Stuart, Nebraska, who made it so that everyday, you could look around and see the difference; the difference that people make.

It's when we look deep inside ourselves that we discover what we have to offer and begin to see our difference.

I can remember being five or six years old and so excited one evening because my family was having a visitor. Oh, he wasn't just any visitor! He always made me laugh, didn't mind if I was in the room while he visited with my parents, and it never failed that he would want to know what I had been up to. Mr. Jack was an adult in a business suit, and made me feel important. Mr. Jack was my parents'...insurance man!

That evening as I visited with Mr. Jack, he suddenly asked me every child's favorite question, “Anita, what do you want to be when you grow up?”

“I want to be a doctor and a secretary, an astronaut, a farmer and a rancher, a mom and a wife, a magician and a waitress, and in my spare time, I'm going to be a nurse and the pope!” Jack's eyes twinkled with laughter, while my parents' eyes glazed over by the dollar signs of all that schooling!

As you can imagine, over time, my long list of options began to shorten. I had a bad experience on a space-themed roller coaster, so the astronaut idea was shot to the moon; doctors and nurses do really great things for people, but



I thought I might need a doctor if a needle made me faint. The magician thing might have worked because I could usually make toys, socks, or dad's tools disappear, but I could never seem to make them re-appear. And the pope...well, I don't think I have to explain that one.

As a five year old, some of those careers seemed glamorous and perfect. And I knew that if I had all of them, I'd have as much money as I could want. Slowly though, I found that I had to do something more than make money. I had to do something that I loved.

I love going home because I know there is always farm work waiting with Dad. I love seeing a baby calf be born, and if working cattle could qualify as a pastime, I'd claim it. I love teaching, and the thing that makes me happiest is seeing others succeed. It's seeing these passions...these loves...that shows me that I want to teach agriculture!

To see the difference, the difference in you, the key is finding what you love...not what everyone else thinks you should love.

Ever since I can remember, people have been asking my little sister Emily if she was going to follow in my footsteps, doing the same things I did. So many times I've wanted to turn to those same people asking those same questions and shout, "We're different people!" We are all so different in our abilities and our interests. How cool is that?!? Isn't it wonderful that we can all do and look and act and be so different from one another? There's something specific that we each have to offer, but we've got to see that difference!

We discover the things we love by pursuing our interests. If you're interested in public speaking, join the speech team or try out for the school play. If you're interested in science, take as many science classes as you can, or help the science teacher one afternoon. And a couple times, try something completely new just to see if you like it. That might be a new leadership conference or a different FFA career development event. Maybe it's trying that new recipe Mom whipped up or a new book that just came out.

There's a certain feeling of satisfaction that comes from searching within ourselves and finding those things we absolutely enjoy. It's happiness...from being with the people we love most and using the talents we know we possess. When we see our difference, there's a completeness that we can and deserve to feel right inside of here.

There's great power in knowing what we enjoy. Something that's even more powerful, is when we take those new-found talents and passions and be the difference for others.

This year, I met an FFA member who defines what it means to "be the difference." In May, I traveled back to Nebraska to attend a chapter officer leadership conference. While I was there, I met a senior named Tim. This last summer, Tim kept busy coaching a little league baseball team and mowing his mom and dad's yard a lot. This winter he's going out for speech team, and right now, he's working on his fourth school play, is on the bowling team and absolutely couldn't wait to get in the combine for harvest this fall! Oh, and Tim has a very cool talent! He can pop wheelies... in his wheelchair! That's right, Tim sits in a wheelchair and he still does all of those things I just mentioned...plus more!



A few years ago, Tim was the only freshman to letter in three sports. He worked hard to earn his spot, and was a tremendous athlete! He loves to laugh, and is a fun-loving guy.

During a summer camp in August 2004, Tim was serving as a junior counselor. One of his favorite parts of camp was the homemade water slide. For two years, Tim had been the champion of racing down the 40-foot slide in 2.99 seconds.

The day was near the end, and everyone had been told to go inside for the evening. After a good deal of convincing though, the adults finally let Tim and his friends go back to the slide for one more ride. Tim was the last to go. He always won the speed competition by going down on his belly and pushing up with his arms at the end to create a fun wave for everyone in the shallow pool. That's how it was supposed to work.

When Tim reached the end of the slide that day, his arms pushed his body up a little too late. They were caught by the water, pulling his head under, and his entire body shot to the bottom of the pool, where the first thing to hit was his head. Everything from his broken neck down was numb.



This fabulous life he'd been living, the fun he'd been having, the things he'd been doing, suddenly changed. After many hospital visits and the agony of physical therapy, Tim regained the use of his arms. Still, he sits in his wheelchair so instead of climbing into the combine this fall, Tim's dad parked it next to a hill, and Tim wheeled across some boards to get in. Instead of playing the sports he was so great at, Tim keeps stats for the football and wrestling teams. Tim can no longer give what he once could...but he's doing even better by giving what he's got.

Tim is an individual who has seen his difference, but even more than that, he's chosen to be the difference for other people through his service.

I truly believe that each of us was put on this earth for the same purpose...to serve one another. It is our differences that determine how we will serve.

We hear the word service, and sometimes we think that it has to be a big sacrifice that we make or something huge that we do for someone else. Isn't what Tim doing service? Service doesn't have to be difficult! Yes, there are people making big sacrifices and serving us everyday, but there are also smaller services we can provide right here. And because of how incredibly different we are from one another, there are so many ways that we can be the difference for other people. Imagine doing what you're great at, and others benefiting from your difference!

We can be the difference for our parents by doing our chores, for our friends by listening, for our students by paying attention to what each one needs.

The companies and individual sponsors who have been recognized tonight are the difference for our organization through their financial support and the time they offer.

Friends, let's be the difference for each other through our service.

As I shared earlier, it has been the people in my hometown who modeled for me how to go about creating the difference. That was certainly the case in the dead of summer, July 1996. I was 10 years old, and all summer I was busy riding around with my dad in the hay field. It was the same thing every year: Grandpa mowed all the hay, our hired hands raked and piled, and Dad baled it all. For as long as I could remember, that's how it had been, and as far as I could figure, that's how it would always be. That summer though, reality hit me all too soon that no, that was not how it would always be.

One particular day of scorching 100 degree heat, Grandpa complained that he wasn't feeling well, and what he meant was that he was having very bad chest pains. When he finally decided to go to the doctor, he drove himself the 10 miles, and thank goodness it wasn't as far as McDonald's because Grandpa Ray was having a heart attack. The doctor quickly put a plan together to airlift Grandpa to a larger hospital as soon as possible. To this, my grandpa announced that he would drive himself the four hours to the next hospital! Thankfully the doctor did not allow this, and Grandpa was able to return home a couple weeks later!

With Grandpa's heart attack, suddenly a key piece of our entire summer operation was missing. He was no longer there to mow the hay, and we were about to begin haying our largest field. As we were rearranging our process for

getting the job done, something truly incredible happened; something that helped me to understand this concept of the difference.

As I headed out to the hayfield a couple days after Grandpa's heart attack, I didn't see just one mower, but ten! There were 20 or 30 people shading themselves under a tree in the field with food for those who were working. A fuel cart was arriving to keep the mowers running; many people were laughing and talking. What would have taken us at least three days to mow was suddenly on the ground in three hours! It was amazing, but it didn't stop there. A couple days later, I awoke to the squeaks of four rakes running, and in the afternoon, seven tractor engines with balers were revved up to go. Eventually, six people were scurrying across the field to put the bales into piles. Everything took only two-and-a-half days because of our neighbors.

Even though they each had a busy schedule of their own, all of them had found some piece of time and some task they could do to help us out; and for everyone, it was something a little different. These were my small town people. It was from them that I learned that we've all got something to give and that we must look deep inside of ourselves to see it. Once we can see our difference, it's then our responsibility to be it.

FFA members, I have seen the difference in you! You have so much to offer! Look for your difference! Explore it. Cultivate it. Celebrate it. There is a power and greatness that lies within each of you that only you can use to impact this world. Choose to share what you have to offer because you are The Difference!

Erica Der

National FFA Southern Region Vice President

"Happy Thanksgiving"

Picture it, it's Thanksgiving Day. The turkey is in the oven and the entire Der family is gathered around our living room. And, in my family, before we can eat the traditional Thanksgiving meal we always have to play the "Thanksgiving game." Now, my mom invented this game many, many years ago when my sister and I were in elementary school and here we are, 15 years later, still playing the game.

First, she gets a big basket and fills it with different colored pieces of paper. We then pass the basket around the living room and everyone, without looking, pulls out a piece of paper. And here's the kicker, we then have to tell everyone in the family what we're thankful for that is the same color as the piece of paper. For example, if I drew yellow I might say, "I am thankful for sunshine." Well, the game sounds simple enough, right? Wrong.



Here's an example of what it looks like every year at my house. I go first and pull out the color white, so I say I'm thankful for my sheep. Every year my dad tries to cheat at the Thanksgiving game by peeking in the basket and drawing out the color black just so he can say he's thankful for...angus cattle.

Then he passes the basket to my grandfather...here we go. He draws out the color purple and says, "I'm thankful for...my wife Elizabeth." My sister and I look at each other. What? My grandmother Elizabeth isn't purple. We've been playing this game for over 15 years and bless his heart he has yet to say something he's thankful for that matches the color of the paper. Over the years my grandmother has been green, yellow, blue, orange, and the list goes on.

And so, as much fun and laughter as my family gets out of playing the game, I thought it would be fun to play a round of the Thanksgiving game here tonight. I'll draw a piece of paper out of the basket. Then, quickly turn to the person next to you and tell them something that you're thankful for that is the same color as the piece of paper. Be quick and name the first thing that comes to mind. Here we go...

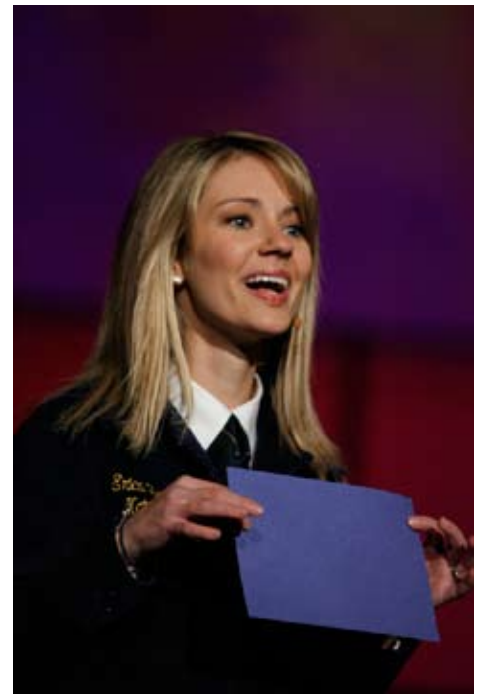
The first color is green, lets try yellow. How about red? Maybe blue...and last but not least orange.

Obviously, we have an awful lot to be thankful for. Why then do we only have Thanksgiving one day a year? Here's an idea...

What if Thanksgiving was every day? What if each day we ate turkey and dressing and every morning Macy's hosted a Thanksgiving Day parade? What if every day started out by tuning in to "A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving"? And precisely at noon each day, your entire extended family piled into in your living room to talk about how much you've grown over the past year and how today everyone is taking a break from their diets. OK, as much as I love Thanksgiving, I'm not sure we need the fall leaves-butterball turkey-pilgrim-cornucopia kind of day every day.

But what if each day was the type of Thanksgiving in which we became so wrapped up in all the blessings we've been given, that we completely forgot about that which we do not have. What if August 28th, and January 16th and April 4th and every day of the year, including this one, were a day of Thanksgiving?

The word Thanksgiving can really be broken down into different parts: Thanks and giving.



So consider this, what if every day of our life was a day of thanks and a day of giving?

I'm sure all of us in this room can think of those times in our lives when it is easy to count our blessings. It's easy to be thankful when we have a large chocolate milkshake from Dairy Queen in one hand and a vanilla waffle cone in the other. It's easy to be thankful when we just aced a Spanish exam and that good looking guy or girl, take your pick, asked you to the homecoming dance. It's easy to be thankful when we just found out about a big fat raise. Boy, oh boy...It's easy to give thanks when our high school football team wins the state championship and when leaving the game we stumble upon a twenty dollar bill in the parking lot.

However; this state of mind, of giving thanks, isn't just something that we should possess only when the world is rosy. Having an attitude of gratitude is a way that we should live our lives moment by moment in the good times and the better times.

This past year there have been many things for which I have been incredibly grateful and I have had endless opportunities to count my blessings. But one day in March, I began to realize that my giving thanks was somewhat conditional.

My teammate, Stuart, and I were on a week-long tour of meeting with FFA sponsors in different parts of the country. We were in North Carolina and had to fly to Minneapolis. Well, needless to say, I was already slightly bummed because our flight wasn't going to land until 11:00 at night so I would be exhausted the next day. Nonetheless, we boarded the plane and off we go taxiing down the runway.

Then we hear those dreaded words, "Unfortunately, ladies and gentlemen..." When you're on an airplane, a sentence that begins with "Unfortunately, ladies and gentlemen..." is not good news, unless, of course, it is followed by "due to bad weather we've been re-directed to Hawaii where we'll have a two day layover, paid for by Delta Airlines." But that didn't happen...so the flight attendant proceeded. "Unfortunately ladies and gentlemen, there's bad weather in Minneapolis, so we will have to remain on the runway until further notice. Thank you for flying Delta."

And it was all down hill from there. I decided that sleep might be the best option at this point but, of course, I'm sitting in the only seat on the plane that is broken and will not recline back. The only drink they're offering is coffee, which I strongly dislike. The blanket I'm given is paper thin yet the plane feels like a meat cooler and the only entertainment I have is watching all the people around me waiting in line for the bathroom. It was the longest night of my life. Time

ticked by so slowly and after four hours of sitting on the runway, we finally left for Minneapolis.

Stuart and I arrived at our hotel at 4:30 in the morning and learned that we needed to be downstairs promptly at 6:00 a.m., ready to leave. Uggghhhh. Could life get any worse right now? So I grabbed about 45 minutes of sleep, got dressed, ran a brush through my hair and threw on my Official Dress, and then headed downstairs for the day. As I got my breakfast of eggs and toast, I began to wonder what in the world did I think I deserved. Yes, my flight was delayed but at least I had a plane that was safe. Yes, I hated coffee but at least I had something to drink. Yes, 45 minutes of sleep is not my normal eight hours, but at least I had a hotel room waiting for me and wonderful people that I was going to meet that day.

Why in the world hadn't I taken the time to think about all the things I had to be thankful for? Sometimes we get so caught up in what we don't have that we forget the things we do have. Every year my family has another Thanksgiving tradition; we read a poem from the newspaper column, "Ann Landers," about things we should be thankful for and it inspired me to write my own version of the poem about blessings we often overlook. It's entitled "Be Thankful."

Be thankful for income tax,
It means you've made money

Be thankful for bee stings,
It means somewhere there's honey

Be thankful for dropped calls,
It means you have a cell phone

Be thankful for "My Space",
It means you're never alone

Be thankful for blemishes,
It means you've got a face

Be thankful for FFA,
It means you've got Dr. Case

Be thankful for screaming children,
It means you can hear

Be thankful for final exams,
It means summer is near

Be thankful for telemarketers,
It means you'll learn a new way to say your last name

Be thankful for football losses,
It means you can say "Just wait 'til next week's game"

Be thankful for not having a date to the prom
It means there's more time to spend with your mom

Be thankful for rainy days
It means you have water

Be thankful for sunburns
It means you've gotten hotter

Be thankful for stop lights,
It means you can drive

Be thankful for loud alarm clocks,
It means you're alive.

It's important for us however, to not just feel a sense of thanks, but to give it as well. One of the individuals from whom I've learned a great deal about giving thanks is my Uncle Foy. Now, many of you have heard about Foy before because I talked about him at your state conventions and conferences. Foy has a heart the size of Montana, loves the Florida Gators and can make you laugh like nobody's business. Foy is also mentally challenged.

Foy gets indigestion a lot because he eats rather quickly but he likes to make us think that when he has heartburn the only thing that will cure it is none other than... a Sonic Diet Coke. So we'll be sitting at the supper table and finishing up when here comes Foy, hand on his heart, sly grin on his face, uttering, "Sonic." So we laugh and, of course, head off to Sonic. His little joke worked.

But Foy isn't just funny, he is awfully wise. In our family, we always say grace before meals, but when I was younger, I noticed that at nighttime when my grandma would give Foy his heart medicine he would always say grace before he took the pills. As a young child, I didn't understand this. Why in the world was he saying grace? This wasn't suppertime. But as I've gotten older I've come to realize that we could all learn a lot from Foy. Why don't we say grace more than just at meals? Grace, in one sense of the word, means offering thanks.

Author, G.K. Chesterson once stated, "You say grace before meals. All right. But I say grace before the concert and the opera, and grace before the play and the pantomime, and grace before sketching, painting, swimming, boxing, walking, playing, dancing and grace before I dip the pen in the ink."

What if we took more time to say thanks for the people and the opportunities and the blessings that we have in our lives? What if we paused throughout our day, every day, to simply say thanks? Thank our grandparents for the lessons they taught us about life, thank our bus driver for taking us to school, thank our parents for the sacrifices they make so that we might pursue our dreams. What is it in your life that you have to be thankful for. Each of us here tonight has so many blessings, but it's up to us to recognize them and then to offer thanks.

Blessings shouldn't be something we only receive and for which we are thankful, they should also be given to others. Each person here can be and is a blessing for someone else.

This past summer I had a chance to learn from some fellow FFA members about the kind of blessing that we can be for others. Ryan Peterson and I traveled to Mississippi to work with state officer teams during the National Leadership Conference for State Officers. While I was there, I met Chris and Nathan who are state officers for the Arkansas Association. I learned that at age 14, Nathan developed a condition called cerebellar ataxia, which means that he has less control of his muscles and in order to get from place to place he needs a strong, steady arm to lean on.

Every time I looked up, Chris was collecting Nathan's belongings before his own, making sure Nathan had everything he needed and extending that steady arm so that Nathan could get to where he needed to go. Chris even made sure that Nathan had his meals, before Chris had his own. In the same token, Nathan went out of his way to sacrifice for his team. It might have been easier for him to delegate tasks to someone else or simply sit out of an activity, but Nathan knew how much his involvement meant to his team and was determined throughout the week to put their best interest ahead of his own.

These two guys taught me what it means to be a blessing for someone else...what it means to do so much good for others that we completely forget about what's in it for me. When is the last time we had that same attitude of giving? When is the last time we gave, expecting nothing in return? That, my friends, is being a blessing for someone else.

The gifts we offer to others don't have to be big, bold, shiny, colorful or even expensive. Blessing other people is really quite simple. It's sending a friend a "Facebook" message, telling someone that they're beautiful, letting a car cut in front of you in traffic, telling the grocery store cashier to have a nice day, writing a Happy Birthday note to a family member, carrying in the groceries for your mama and making certain your agriculture teacher knows how much they've changed your life.

Blessing other people really only takes a little time and effort and the difference you will make is remarkable. It starts by asking ourselves, "What can I do to be a blessing for someone else? What can I do to be a blessing to someone today?"

As I think back to those little pieces of colored paper I now realize why the Thanksgiving game is more than just a game. It is a reminder of all the things, both big and small, that we have to be thankful for. Every day our challenge is to live our lives in Thanksgiving. To offer thanks for all that we have been blessed with and then in turn give blessings to those around us. When our lives become filled with days of constant Thanksgiving, we will realize that we are truly a blessed people. And so today, on the 27th of October, from my heart to yours, Happy Thanksgiving.



Jessie Geib

National FFA Secretary

“What if They Knew?”

October 25th, 2006

Wow, this is hard to believe. I am on my last few days of being a national officer, and tomorrow afternoon I will be standing on the stage in Conseco Fieldhouse with nearly 15,000 people staring back at me. Hmm... I wonder what they will all be thinking. I know what I was thinking every time I heard a retiring address from a national officer. It was always, “Wow. I wish I could be like them; to have that speaking ability, that knowledge, that confidence. They just have it all.”

I know some of them will be thinking that tomorrow. Ha, if only they knew. What if they knew I am no different from them? I wonder if they know I doubt myself. What if they knew that my first speech this year did not go so well? If they knew I get so nervous when I give speeches, would they still clap? What if they knew I don't always have the right thing to say? If they knew all those things, would they still like me?

What if they knew?

It amazes me how scary it is to show people who I really am. I am always afraid they won't look at me as perfect, cool, the girl who has it all together, the “model” national officer. Why do I worry about these things? There are a number of reasons. I don't want to let people down, I expect the best out of myself, and the big reason, I care what people think. And do you know what? I am not perfect.

Now, I know some of you are thinking, “Yeah, Jessie, whatever. You're a national officer; you have no idea what it is like to be me.”

But, you know what? I do have an idea of what you're going through because I am you. I am an FFA member. I'm an average girl with hopes and dreams. I trip and fall, I struggle with having confidence, I've lost, I've had my heart broken a time or two, and I have definitely been laughed at.

I am you.

And just like you, I sometimes hide things about myself because I'm worried about what other people might think. It's that common question, “What if they knew?” What would they think?

You know, I have been struggling with the question “What if they knew?” for as long as I can remember, all the way back to my childhood days growing up with my brother, Clay.

Now Clay is the coolest older brother any younger sibling could ask for. First of all, he had an amazing book collection that he would let me borrow anytime. Clay loved cartoons as much as I did, and every Saturday morning we would watch every last episode of the Smurfs or Darkwing Duck. Every morning during the summer, Clay would get up early to walk my 4-H lambs with me and never complained about it. And of course he was my biggest fan. Most importantly though, he loved me, and I loved him right back. He was definitely my best friend.

Now, most of my friends didn't know Clay as he went to a different school, but in the second grade, I never imagined I wouldn't want them to know Clay.

In second grade, I guess you could say that I was in the cool crowd. I was fairly fast so everyone wanted to be on



my team for freeze tag. I had horses so everyone always wanted to come to my house, and I had a sister who was in high school....the fastest way to getting friends!

One day my friends and I were playing our usual recess game of freeze tag, when all of sudden someone yells, "Hey! Something is going on!" I look over my shoulder and sure enough, a group has formed about a hundred feet away. As I run over to the group it doesn't take long to notice who was in the middle. It's Karen.

Karen was one of my classmates, and I knew her better than most kids did. She had a rough life. Her dad was gone and a mom that was never around. When I was younger, I never saw anything really wrong with Karen. I knew she learned at a slower pace and needed a little extra help, but to me she was no different. After all, she liked the color pink and kittens, she thought our classmate Cody was cute and she wanted to be an actress someday. She was my classmate; she was Karen.



But that day, I began to see Karen wasn't like me in how she was treated. The kids on the playground had formed a circle around her and had begun to lightly push her and tease her by poking her and waving their arms. Then they began to call her names like reject, retard, and tell her she was nothing and a nobody.

I immediately wanted to scream and yell at them. "What if you knew what it was like to grow up like Karen, would you be so mean? What if you knew she couldn't help it?"

But then, I began to selfishly worry about me, "What if they knew? What if they knew I was related to someone like Karen? What if they knew that Clay, my brother and my best friend, had special needs just like Karen?" But did I say anything to stop them? No, I hid my feelings from them. Because then, in their eyes, I would be like Karen. Not cool and not perfect.

How many times in our lives do we do that? How many times a day do we do that? We hide something about ourselves. We hide our families, our insecurities, our future plans, who we have a crush on, or things about our past because we so scared of what other people will think. I love Clay so much; yet, I used to hide him, because I thought it would be easier than dealing with what people said.

We think that by hiding ourselves life will be easier for us, but really it does just the opposite. It makes life harder. It's exasperating to pretend all the time, to put up that front, that show of someone we're not. Hiding, being someone we're not makes life harder.

Now, I know you all are thinking, "Yeah Jessie, I should be myself and not hide who I am, but how do I do that? It's just not that easy."

And you know what; I wish I could make it easy for you. Reality is this...there is no quick fix, no easy answer to it. Deep down each one of us can sense when we're hiding. We know when we are being true to ourselves, or when we are being someone we aren't. And it's hard to do; gosh it can be so hard to do sometimes. But no one can write our stories, live our life, have the influence we are meant to have but us....we are the only ones that can do that!

Hiding your newfound passion? Tell everyone you know that you can't wait to return to the family farm.

Worried about what people will say when you think the jokes on the new kid are a little mean? Stand up for him and be-friend him, let people know you care about other's feelings.

You're hiding your family because you think they're a little weird or different? Look around, no family is normal and chances are your friends think the same thing about theirs!

You want to get involved in a school activity but your friends have no interest in it? Sign up, get involved, and enjoy it! Don't let your friends dictate your life.

When we quit hiding, quit asking "What if they knew?" and start showing people who we really are, it is amazing how much it will do for ourselves. But it is even more amazing is how much it will do for those around us.

Now, I will be the first person to say I am proud to be from South Dakota, I am proud to be a farm girl, and that I am proud to be an FFA member. Oh, and by the way, I love agriculture!

And because of these loves, there is one other thing I love...my family's cattle feedlot. Ladies and gentleman, this is my family's operation. I was raised here. I was taught here. I learned how to ride a horse here. I learned the joys and discomforts of working alongside family here. I learned what it was like to be on the bottom of the totem pole. I learned the pride that comes from working in agriculture. I learned the satisfaction of a hard day's work. I learned it was ok to expect the best in others and how to treat people as you wish to be treated. Most importantly, I learned that someday I wanted to take over this cattle feedlot.

Throughout this year, I missed home a lot. You know how some people carry pictures of family and grandkids with them? Well, I carried these pictures with me this year. And I was never slow to share my family's operation with others – just ask my teammates or my Japanese host family! I was never trying to brag or show off what my family had. I was just so proud.

So, when someone would ask what my family did for a living, I would whip out the pictures and start explaining things to them about the operation and they would ask questions and I would keep explaining and I would just get so excited telling them about it just like I am with you.

But then I would remember, and I would think, "What if they knew?" What if they knew that after 26 years of being in business, after 26 years of pouring our blood, sweat, and tears into this place, that we had to go out of business?



What if they knew that due to new environmental regulations we couldn't meet, we were forced to close the first of September? What if they knew that on September 16th this year, I watched as the family feedlot was sold off piece by piece? All of a sudden what had been so picture perfect wasn't any longer and once again, I found myself hiding. I found this out last December and I wouldn't even tell my closest friends until May. Why wouldn't I tell them? Because I asked, "What if they knew?" If they knew, would they still think we were credible in agriculture, especially the beef industry?

Even though I knew that I should be open and comfortable and show people that this is me; that this is what my family is going through... it was hard.

Now for some of us, it isn't our family going out of business. For some of us, it's might be the shame we feel because we didn't get a chapter office, that our parents are going through a divorce, that our house isn't as nice as our friends, that we lost our job, or that school is one huge struggle for us.

All of us have different things that are really hard for us to share. For me, showing people that I was not a perfect officer was really hard, letting my classmates see my brother had special needs was really hard, and sharing with people that our family was going out of business was really hard.

But you know what made all these things so much easier; using my own experiences to help others.

Throughout the year, as I traveled, people would always ask me, "What is the hardest part of being a national of-

ficer?" I admit, I would hide what was hard for me, because I was afraid of what people would think. The honest answer? The hardest part for me was having confidence that I could do my job as a national officer; that I could make you all proud to have me represent you; that I was influential and inspiring.

Now, I am not just telling you this so you can feel sorry for me and tell me that I did a great job. No, it's to let you know that the more I opened up about my insecurities and challenges, the more and more people I found going through similar things. And they would open up to me about their own insecurities and problems and I was able to help them and we were able to help each other.



It is time for all of us to start helping by making life a little easier for each other, and we can start by helping them feel comfortable with themselves. Author George Eliot, said, "What do we live for if it is not to make life less difficult for each other?"

This year I wanted to have the biggest impact on you I could by making you all feel comfortable with yourselves, by making you feel great about the person you are. But the only way I could do that was by being open with you about who I was.

All of us know that person or a couple of people we can help through our own experiences. Maybe it is a first-year FFA member that messed up the creed in front of the class, maybe it is a friend that just had the girl of his dreams turn him down, someone who didn't win that award they were striving for or maybe it is a friend who is facing a tough personal challenge at home.

Whatever it is, there are people who need you. Open up, show them who you are, share yourself.

October 26th, 2006

Today was a great day. Early this morning I was able to see my whole family and have breakfast at the top of Conesco Fieldhouse. And this afternoon, I gave my retiring address. It felt so good to stand on stage and share my message with so many FFA members. During my speech, I kept wondering...

What if everyone knew how perfect they already are when they are themselves, when they stop hiding, stop putting up that front.

What if they knew how special each one of them is and how much power they have to help others by just being themselves.

I sure hope each one of them embraces who they are and shares that true self. They have so much ability to help others through their experiences.

What if they knew all this? Well now, I hope they do.

Ryan Peterson

National FFA Eastern Region Vice President

“With an Open World”



It was that time of year again. While most of my friends dreaded it, I wasn't too worried. It's not like I hadn't been through it six years in a row already. Really, it was no big deal. This time was the longest it had ever taken. When Mom finally came home, I didn't think I even had to ask to know what I already knew.

I thought I'd better ask anyway, just to keep up appearances, “So, Mom, how did everything go with the parent teacher conferences?”

She answered, “Oh, you know just that and this. Your sister needs to work on that, and your brother seems to be doing well with this. And Ryan your teachers all seemed pretty pleased.”

Oh, yeah, that's what I like to hear! Phew, clean report. I turned to head back into the living room when I heard a, “But!”

But? There had never been a “but” before. I make it all the way to seventh grade with flying colors and this time, this time I get a “but”. This can't be good.

My mom finishes as I turn back toward her, “Mrs. Mallory says that you seem a bit close-minded when you are in her English class.”

Close-minded? Close-minded!? How dare she, how could she? She's calling me close-minded? I've only been in Mrs. Mallory's class for five weeks and she is already calling me closed-minded? She doesn't even know me, how could she, of all people, be calling me close minded?

“Mom, what does close-minded mean?”

“Well, I guess she's saying that you don't listen to new ideas very well and you think that your ideas will be good enough on their own. Do you think that's true, that you don't like other people's ideas?”

“No, I like other people's ideas, just not Mrs. Mallory's. Mom, just the other day, Nick had an idea to switch the caps on Mrs. Mallory's dry erase markers so the colors were all mixed up. And Ron had an idea we super glue her stapler shut. I loved their ideas.”

Mom didn't think that was very funny. And as she ended the conversation, I thought, “Well, I'll show Mrs. Mallory who's close-minded.”

I took such offense to having that label of a close-mind being put on me that I made it my personal mission to be the most open-minded person I could possibly be anytime I was in her class.

Little did I know that those fifty minutes everyday in Mrs. Mallory's English class would influence the way I looked at the world for the rest of my life.

I came to realize in that English class, and in the years since, that simply living with an open mind isn't easy all the time; for me, I had to learn and develop two things that proved key to opening my mind. First, it takes an ability to see and accept new perspectives. And then, I realized that by becoming a student of the world and learning from all people and all experiences, I could shed that label of close-minded. It is indeed an open mind which is our ticket to an exciting fulfilled life.

Jack Canfield, author of *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, has a great story about the value of perspective.

A businessman was driving home from work one day and stopped by the little league baseball park to watch a little league baseball game. He sat down on the bench by a young boy in uniform and he leaned over to ask the score. The little boy replied with a big smile, "We're down 14 to nothing!"

"Well, you don't seem too upset about it," the businessman replied.

The little boy came back with, "We haven't been up to bat yet!"

No matter how old or how young we are, every one of us has our own way of perceiving the world. Even though another person's ideas may seem so different from our own, their viewpoint may still be extremely useful to us. They just might offer another perspective that never occurred to us. How often do we find ourselves saying, "I never thought of that before?"

Often we are so preoccupied with normal activities of daily life that we fail to consciously look for the many perspectives that surround us. It's these fresh perspectives that bring the possibility of new relationships, new opportunity, new activities, new knowledge, and a new appreciation for our total life experience.

Henry Ford shared this insight when he stated, "If there is any secret to success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point-of-view and see things from his angle as well as from your own."

How many differences could be resolved if we would take the time to look at both sides of a situation? Chapter officers, listen to your younger members and understand where they are coming from. FFA members, take a look at your chapter through the eyes of your advisor, principal or local business community. Have you ever wondered of what an inner city FFA member thinks of a farm boy or vice-versa? For the parents and advisors, I know it's hard sometimes to agree with our music or style of clothes but I'm sure your parents and teachers were scratching their heads about the exact same thing not too long ago.



Developing an awareness of the views of others is crucial to successful experiences throughout life. Not everyone can see eye-to-eye and we are all entitled to our own opinion and perceptions. But let's make sure our opinion isn't decided too quickly before looking at all the angles of a situation.

By opening our minds, our perspectives are going to change over time, and that change can be greatly influenced, even accelerated, by how willing we are to be students of the world, hungry learners who seek out people and experiences that are far from familiar.

Come back with me to that seventh grade year when I was first diagnosed with a closed mind by Dr., excuse me, Mrs. Mallory. Part of that year involved my first home economics class. I was so excited to learn that our class was going to sew buttons, balance check books, pretend to go shopping, and we even were going to cook a full blown meal.

We divided into groups one day for a cooking exercise, and I thought I had drawn the short straw. You see, I ended up with none other than Stan "The Man" Gordon in my group.

Now Stan got sent down to the office what seemed like several times a week. He had a story for every imaginable experience in life, and it was hard to tell if they were all true. But one thing was for sure, you didn't dare mention that to Stan Gordon. He stood a good half foot taller than everyone else in our grade and wasn't afraid to fight anyone. He made certain that everyone knew that, too. I had always gotten along all right with him. I remember Stan's demeanor the day of the cooking activity; he was super excited because, apparently, he loved to cook.

Our group decided that we would tackle breakfast; my favorite type of food is breakfast food so this was going to be simple. Plus, it's hard to mess up scrambled eggs and toast.

Well, the big day came and we all brought our ingredients for our masterpiece meal to class. Things were cooking along just fine when it was my turn to stir the scrambled eggs. I did what I always did when stirring scrambled eggs and everything looked all right so I set down the spatula and turned to talk to some classmates. I turned back to the stove to check on my handy work, and there was Stan.

"Did you leave this frying pan handle sticking out?"

"I guess so."

"Don't you know that some kid could come by and pull this down on top of him? I could have walked right by not even knowing and knocked it all over me! You have to keep it safe man, always keep the handle pointed to the side."

I was dumb-founded. I stood there speechless. I couldn't believe it. I had just been rightfully called out on a kitchen safety violation by a person who I didn't even think knew what the word safety meant. But good ole' Stan Gordon wasn't afraid to let me know I had made a mistake.

It was difficult to recognize at the time, but Stan Gordon taught me something more than kitchen safety that day. That day I realized that any person, regardless of reputation, background, age, experience level, or personal beliefs could teach me something about life. Up until that point, I had relied solely on three groups of people to teach me everything I needed to know: my parents, my teachers, and my older relatives. I don't know if I ever considered the people that were around me in every aspect, everyday as a source of constant learning.

Too many times we close our minds to people that are different than us. Because of a person's race, religion, sexual orientation, economic status, or their nationality, we immediately think we cannot possibly learn anything from them or that they may not bring more value into our life.

These close-minded views of the world can make us believe that we don't have the choices or options necessary to be successful in life.

American philosopher George Santayana once said, "The wisest mind has something yet to learn."

FFA members, be students of the world. Pursue a positive open mind with the idea that every experience can be a learning experience. Not just a lesson from teachers. Not just a lesson from the parents. Every single person can offer us something of value to add to our lives.

The next time we're randomly put into groups for an agriculture class project, let's take a closer look at who our new friends really are. Do you think our alumni members or chaperones could show us something never before seen? Would it be a crime to talk to the person sitting in the seat across from us on the bus, even though we're of different religions? Would it be crazy to think we could learn something from the person who cuts our hair or the clerk that scans our groceries? Or even our next waiter or waitress?

Every person, regardless of their background, their beliefs, their age, their experience can teach you something and can't we do the same for others? It doesn't take a title or an office to make an influence on another person. But being open and positive to all the experiences we encounter together will take our influence to a higher level.



Looking back now Mrs. Mallory was right about a twelve year-old seventh grader who thought he knew it all. Of course, it's easy to believe we know it all when our view of the world is so small. But when we strive to see the world through the eyes of other people and realize that we are always learning from everyone around, our view of the world suddenly changes. It becomes limitless in opportunity.

Let's do our best to recognize different perspectives in our lives and learn from everyone around us. Let's make certain that we never discount an opportunity or chance to learn something new. Ladies and gentleman, let's open our arms and embrace the opportunities that are before us. Open our hearts and love the differences we all have. Open our eyes to see the world as our greatest teacher. Open our minds to a world of endless possibility.

Stuart Joy

National FFA Western Region Vice President

"The Way Up Is Down"

The time had finally come for me to shine. I knew with her I would be the big man on campus, and boy was she beautiful. She was a custom made, green, three quarter ton, classic Ford complete with a farm tough grill guard. Now all I lacked was that pretty girl to fill that empty space in the middle seat and I knew that would not be a problem because we all know the ladies love a pick-up man.

Okay, so maybe my old farm truck, Greenie, wasn't all that glamorous and you girls probably wouldn't have flocked to her. But now that my older brother had a new truck, she was all mine. I decided that she needed a proper breaking-in.



It was an early spring day and I'd just delivered the last order of meat from our annual FFA fundraiser. I had some time to spare before having to be at judging practice that evening. It had been raining all day long and being from the dry climate of southeastern New Mexico I saw this as an opportunity. An old farm truck, country dirt roads, rain, and a teenage boy added up to only one thing. That's right, going mudding.

I was like Bo and Luke Duke of Hazard County whipping it left and whipping it right, spinning, slinging mud here, there, and everywhere. As I was thinking how cool I would look showing up at judging practice with my truck covered in mud, all my fun came to an end.

Ever had an experience when life is going good and then you fall into a rut from which you just can't seem to get out? Well that's what happened, literally. After struggling for hours to get my truck free of the mess I had gotten into, I finally broke down and resorted to my last and most dreadful option. I called my Dad.

And as if it weren't humiliating enough to have my Dad come pull me out of the mud, I then had to explain to my FFA advisors why I didn't make it to judging practice that evening. Before long all my friends had discovered what had happened and were determined to not let me forget.

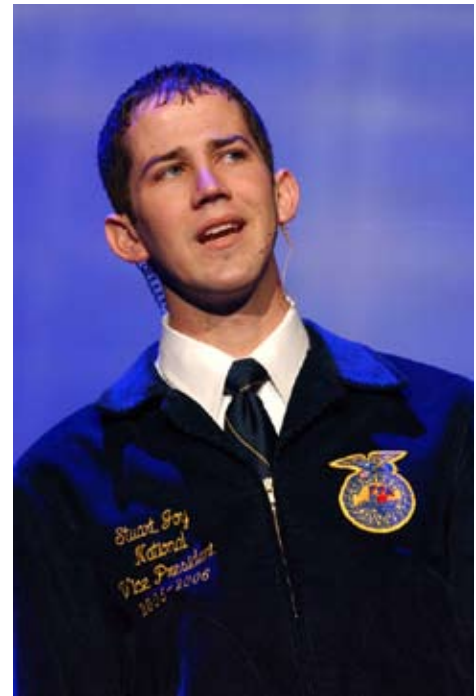
Have you ever been humiliated? Maybe it was slipping on the ice and falling flat on your back while running to catch the school bus. Possibly it was that squeak in your voice as you said the FFA creed in front of the entire class. It could have been spending a whole month building up the courage to ask that girl out, only to be rejected. Maybe it was performing the entire flag raising ceremony at FFA camp with your fly down. Perhaps you're like me and it's all of the above.

Most, if not all of us, have been humiliated at some point or several points in our lives. We blush, we cry, we try to find a corner in which we can hide. We can't wait to get out of the rut that we've gotten ourselves into. The disadvantage is that if we don't maintain this attitude of humility we are destined to be humiliated again and

again. Being humiliated will humble us for a moment but true humility is attained when we get down by choosing to put others first and getting over ourselves. When we approach life this way our journey up is continual because the way up is down!

I have been blessed with a very close knit family in which both of my granddads were elders in our church and even best friends. Papa Trueman has since passed away, but one of my favorite pastimes is to hear my other granddad, Papa Doyle, tell stories about him. There is a particular story that I enjoy hearing the most.

My granddads would often visit one another on Sunday afternoons. One Sunday they were at Papa Trueman's house sitting in the easy chairs visiting while Grandma was behind them at the kitchen table writing out checks for the monthly bills. Grandma had finished paying all the bills when it came time to decide how much they were going to give to the children's home that month. It was at that point that she politely asked if she could interrupt for just a minute and asked Papa Trueman how much he wanted her to make the check out for.



You must know that Papa Trueman was a farmer and made due with what he had but rarely had much left over. He looked back at her and then he looked down in his lap and sat there for just a little bit. Directly he mentioned a large figure. Papa Doyle could never recall exactly how much the figure was but he remembers it was a considerable amount. Papa Trueman then turned back around, looked down in his lap again, and said, "I suspect those children need that worse than we do."

Papa Doyle told me that he'd never forget that and he also always makes a point to say, "It was an honest gift and that was the way Trueman operated so often."

I have since pondered why Papa Doyle referred to Papa Trueman's charity as an "honest gift." I believe he called it such because Papa Trueman truly believed that those to whom he was being charitable had needs greater than his own. From being active in the church to caring for foster children to giving a weary traveler a little extra cash, Papa put others first.



Let's try living life this way and see the result of our actions. Tutor a classmate who's struggling. Give a pint of life during the next blood drive. Donate to a charity you believe in. Take the time to sincerely listen to the grief of someone who has lost a loved one. I believe the result we will find is that others will trust and respect us. By most standards, Papa Trueman lived a fairly uneventful life, but because he put others first, he was respected by most who knew him and rarely did anyone speak ill of him.

FFA members, great leaders are people who put others first. The way up is down!

This past August I had one of those rare opportunities in a national officer's year to be home for a week. During these times I always made a point of visiting with Grannie and Papa Doyle. This particular week after Wednesday evening church service I made my way back to the pew where they always sit. When I found Grannie, I noticed something unusual. She told me that he had started a new job and had to work that night. I decided that after I had a bite to eat, I would stop by and say "hello" to Papa at his new job.

As I pulled into the parking lot where he now worked, I could see him standing just inside the door. I parked my truck

and then I sat there hesitant to go in. I worried what his reaction to seeing me might be. It wasn't because we had a bad relationship; we had a great one. I was worried because of the nature of his new job. You see, Papa's new job was a greeter at Wal-Mart. For some crazy reason I thought that perhaps Papa would be embarrassed of his little blue vest or the fact that during retirement he had to pick up a job in the first place.

I finally got up the courage to go inside. He greeted me as if I were the finest customer to step inside the store all day long. We visited for a while and I'll never forget the attitude he had. That was just his first day as a greeter and he was happy to have already seen so many folks that he hadn't seen in quite some time, including myself.

As I strolled back to my truck, I realized the reason for my hesitation in coming to see him. It wasn't because Papa had a problem with pride; he was the humblest man I knew. It was I who had the problem. It was my concern as to how his job might make me look. It was my preconceived notion as to what being a store greeter was like. It was me who couldn't get over me.

Later that week, Grannie told me there never had been a job that Papa thought was beneath him. Anytime the family needed a little extra money, he would work the farm during the day and then pick up a moonlight shift somewhere in town. He didn't care what it was. The reason why, she never did say, but I knew. Papa wasn't thinking about himself, he was thinking about his family, the customer, the company. He rarely thought of himself.

If we want to make a difference in this world we oftentimes have to get over ourselves. Yet we continue to ask ourselves: What will people think or what will they say? Get over yourself! It's not about you and it's not about me. It is about them, those people around us who we have an opportunity to influence.

What does this look like? How does it play out in our lives? The next time our parents begin lecturing or scolding instead of getting haughty and all worked up, we instead get down and listen, get down and seek to understand. The next time a friend really messes up and hurts instead of blaming and lashing out, we instead forgive. The next time a younger chapter member begins to annoyingly follow our group around, instead of worrying about how they will make us look and telling them to get lost, we instead bring them into the group and show them the ropes, grow them as a leader.

I've heard it said that "the greatest among us must be the least and the servant of all." Leaving a lasting impression requires us to get down. Get down off the pedestals, get down off of the high horses, and get down to the level from which we can truly serve others. The way up is putting others first. The way up is getting over ourselves. The way up is down! FFA members, get down!

Travis Jett

National FFA President

"Average"

As a little leaguer, my biggest concern was my batting average. I would spend hours figuring it. This was after I made slight adjustments for poor umpiring, lucky defensive plays, and the sun being in my eyes. At age sixteen, my attention turned to average miles per gallon. When you travel 45 miles everyday to go to school on a chapter officer's salary, it's a big deal. In college, I spend a lot of time computing my grade point average using a calculator, of course. These averages nearly everyday of my life, but there is one more "average" that is constantly on my mind. For as long as I can remember, I have feared being someone who could be described as "just average."



As I began this year I was willing to do just about anything to make sure people would not think I was just an average national officer. People would say things like "great speech", "good workshop", "I loved your presentation", but there were always those things I did or thought that made me feel pretty average. For instance, I told myself a national officer shouldn't be scared of meeting new people, but every time I did a chapter visit or arrived at a state convention I felt I was scared to death. National officers shouldn't get nervous before they give a speech, right? Nearly every time I prepare to go out on stage, including this afternoon, I want to be sick. What if who I am isn't good enough? What if I am just an average national officer? I've feared average on the sports field, in relationships, and in others' eyes. Average has been the scariest thing I could think of.

My fear of average has kept me from so many things. I'm satisfied with shielding who I am. I am content exploring only the surface of others and myself, and I fear taking many risks because I might be seen as average. Avoiding average at all cost has long been my objective, and as the fall of 1999 hit, I thought I had succeeded.

It was my ninth grade year, and I was the quarterback of the freshman football team. The talk around town had started about how we had a chance to be pretty good. We had good size, good speed, and lots of smarts. So there I was, quarterback of the undefeated junior high football team, everything was going perfectly, and I thought that I was about as far from average as you could get in Laverne, Oklahoma.

The third game of the season was at hand, and we would be battling one of our rivals, the Mooreland Bearcats. We jumped out to an early lead and were handling them pretty easily. Heck, we were even convinced the Dallas Cowboys couldn't stop our offense. I was standing in the huddle when our wide receiver brought the play in from the sideline. "Tiger Right 132 Tight End Dump," he said. That was music to my ears; this was no average play. It was one of our best.

We strutted to the line of scrimmage; I scanned the line. My cadence blared, "Blue 16, Blue 16, Hut, Hut." I made the fake, stepped back, struck my best Troy Aikman pose, and prepared to launch the ball. I could see the linebacker blasting through our line, but I also saw my receiver who was wide open. The ball left my hand; the linebacker connected. As I was driven back into the ground and the back of my helmet was the first thing that hit the ground.

Lying on the ground wondering where that Mack truck had come from and my vision started to blur. Slowly I got up looking for my good ole teammate that missed his block and thinking that my vision would clear up in a second. But it didn't. Eventually it got worse until I was seeing two of everything. After being taken out of the game and getting checked out by the coaches I was a little woozy, but rather impressed that we had put 4040 points up on the scoreboard. Now that's one heck of a backup quarterback!

Went home, went to bed and I woke up the next morning still seeing double, so my parents and I went to the hospital. It was determined that I should get an MRI. They knew I had suffered a concussion, but following the procedures it was beginning to look a little more serious. There was a blood clot forming in one of the cavities above my brain. The doctor immediately put me on blood thinner to break up the clot. During the next couple months everyone around me seemed pretty nervous, but I felt confident that everything would be fine. I mean everything had to be fine. Football was what separated me from average.

In December we went back to the doctor for the final check up. He thankfully reported that the blood clot was gone. With my family relieved, I asked the question that had been on my mind, "When can I play football again?"

Long silence and finally he said, "No more football... ever."



I was shocked. My team depended on me. But more importantly, I depended on football to keep me from being average. I was now what I feared most. I was average.

Being quarterback had become, in a sense, my shield. My number 14 jersey was what I put on to keep the rest of the world from seeing who I was. Since I began junior high, people had seen me as a football player, but now that football was gone, what would they see me as? What if they looked deeper? I worried that if people saw there were some morals and values that I lived by, they might think I was a “goodie-goodie.” What if people knew that secretly I liked school? What if they found out that my favorite style of guitar music to play was bluegrass. I would be an outcast forever. You see it is so easy for all of us to put up these shields, these make-believe barriers in an attempt to convince the world that we are not average. We know that it probably isn't right, but at least we will be accepted. The world tells us for a guy to keep from being average he should put up a shield that looks tough. He shouldn't respect women, and should always be ready to fight. A girl's shield should look exactly like a model. She can not seem too smart, and, most of all, she must constantly have a group of friends to gossip with about other girls. So if a guy was to hang out with the kid that wasn't as popular, or give an underclassman a ride home, that would be a lot less cool and a lot more average. If a girl was to date a boy or wear clothes that her friends didn't deem cute her reputation would be ruined. She could be just average.

So many times we work so hard to shield ourselves from average that we shield the world from who we really are. One of my favorite places in the world is a place I could show exactly who I was without the fear of average. There were no shields and no worries. That place is Oklahoma FFA's summer leadership camp.



Arriving at Camp Tulakogee three years ago, I was so excited about the week ahead. There are so many parts of camp I loved but my favorite part was small group time. Small groups are made up of about 15 students and one counselor. You meet together several times and become great friends.

When I met the students in the small group that I would be leading, they seemed like fairly ordinary FFA members. There was no one in the group that really stood out more than anyone else, but as the week progressed I began to notice something special happening. There was not a shield that was present, and no one feared being average.

On the last night of camp, our small group began to talk about role models. All the students were taking turns talking about the people in their lives who had been an inspiration, and then we got to Braun.

Braun paused for a second before naming his role models and then said, “You all are my role models. It felt so good this week to be accepted and feel like I'm a part of something special.”

Braun continued to share that there were some things in his life that he needed to set straight and that every person in the group had helped him realize that. He finished by sincerely telling each of us that we had changed his life.

After Braun finished, there was silence as everyone soaked in his words. We understood that we had been a part of something special. The profound change that happened in Braun and every person in that group wasn't from the camp's keynote speakers or the motivational workshops. The change was a result of ordinary students who weren't afraid of average and sincerely cared about one another.

A few months after camp, I decided to write Braun a letter. I wrote a few lines asking how he had been and mailed it off. In a few weeks I got a reply, and I will never forget opening the letter. The first line said. “My name is Sheri Knox. I am Braun's mom. We received your letter yesterday. I am deeply saddened to tell you that Braun was killed in a car accident on August 22, 2004. We lost our only son.”

At that point I stopped reading. There I was back in that small group looking at Braun and all the other members in the group.

I started reading again. "He was a great son. He loved FFA with all his being. He loved to help others and take care of his pigs. He talked forever about the great time he had at camp. He couldn't wait to see all of the new friends he made."

Then came the line I will never forget. "Braun was a great person before FFA, but just seemed to have found the one thing that made him a fine young man."

I began to tear up, all I felt from the memory of Braun was sadness, but as I read Braun's mother's letter, I realized the tremendous happiness that had come from Braun's life and the joy that Braun found as a part of this organization. I remembered the change I had seen in Braun that week. I remembered Braun saying that the people of our small group had become his role models, and that the small group had encouraged him to set some things straight in his life. I realized that the one thing that made Braun a truly fine young man wasn't FFA, but FFA members like those he had met at camp.

Thinking back to that small group experience, I know that Braun had been placed in our lives for a reason, and that all of us had been put in Braun's life for a reason as well. I am so glad that for a week at camp no one was afraid of showing their true self and not a single person was worried about seeming average. That week saw 15 lives, including mine, changed. We realized that the impact of genuine ordinary people, like everyone in this room, can be incredible.

Ordinary people can make an extraordinary difference.

FFA chapters are changed by students who genuinely care about other students. You don't have to be a chapter officer.

Communities are changed by actions that put the needs of others first. You don't have to be an elected city leader.

Minds are changed by words from the heart. You don't have to be a motivational speaker.

Hearts are changed by showing others that their lives are valued.

Lives are changed by those who aren't afraid of being average. You don't have to be anything you are not.

This year, my main goal has been to share with you those things that I wished I would have realized sooner, and my greatest realizations has been that average is nothing for fear. At times I was afraid to lower my shield because I thought people would be disappointed in me. So I'm not always comfortable meeting new people. Maybe I do get nervous before giving a speech. That doesn't mean I'm average, and the challenges you face in your life doesn't mean you are averages either.

From a football field in northwest Oklahoma, to a group of 15 people at a summer FFA camp, to the thousands of people I met this year, I have realized there is no such thing as an average FFA member. There is no such thing as an average parent, supporter, or FFA advisor. There is no such thing as an average student walking the halls of your school without a place to fit in. There is no such thing as just average because we all have something extraordinary to share with the world.

FFA members, not a single one of us is guaranteed another day. I know the time that we have is much too precious to shield who we are, and I have seen proof that ordinary people can make. Will you have the courage to show that extraordinary part of you? Will you look for that extraordinary something in others? What would you do if you weren't afraid of being average? There is someone waiting for each of you to make an extraordinary difference in their life, and you can do it because... you are much more than average.



NATIONAL FFA DELEGATES SHAPE ORGANIZATION'S FUTURE AT CONVENTION



As more than 50,000 blue jackets walked the streets of Indianapolis, many might wonder how decisions are made for an organization as large and diverse as the National FFA Organization.

The National FFA Organization's policies and goals are determined by a group of 475 high school-aged FFA members from all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Each state is allowed one voting delegate per every 1,000 members. Most delegates are current state FFA officers while some are area or regional officers.



During the national FFA convention, public hearings are held to discuss issues that have been brought forward by state associations. Public hearings are open to all members of the FFA and members are allowed to give testimony on issues that are important to them.

Each state association is encouraged to submit five issues for consideration to the national delegate process by July 1. Then, during the State Presidents' Conference held later that month in Washington, D.C., state officers discuss the state-submitted issues and prioritize them for national consideration. The national delegate issues are selected and the national officers appoint corresponding committees. Some issues selected to be considered this year include start-up grants for new chapters, providing FFA materials in both English and Spanish, middle school membership opportunities and female official dress.

Delegates are able to choose the corresponding committees on which they wish to serve. This allows the delegates to take part in the issues that interest them most.

Washington delegate Andrew Barth takes pride in representing members from his state and shaping the future of the organization. "My favorite part about being a national delegate is being a part in the process of deciding what happens to the organization," Barth said. "It is an honor to be a part of the voice that speaks for the future of our organization."



Once the delegates have selected and been assigned to corresponding committees, they meet and pass recommendations for the organization. The recommendations are then passed to the full delegate committee where it is voted on. The results of that vote take immediate effect on the organization's policies.

Indiana delegate Laura Bradford, said she enjoys being a national delegate because it allows her to see behind the scenes and understanding how decisions are made for the National FFA Organization. She also enjoys meeting other people who share her passion for FFA. "I've been to convention before, but have never met this many people," Bradford said. "I enjoy being a part of deciding on issues that will affect the whole organization."

Texas national delegate Tyler Treptow said he enjoyed taking part in directing the future of the National FFA Organization. "We only have delegate duties this week, but our main concern is taking care of business at the national level," Treptow said. "In one week we make decisions that will affect our organization for years to come."

National delegates are the voice of FFA members from their state. They play a vital role in making decisions for the future of the National FFA Organization.

2006 NATIONAL FFA DELEGATE ISSUES

1 Institute Start-Up Grants for New Chapters

Submitted by: North Carolina

- Committee Chair: Matt Anderson, Wisconsin
- Committee Coordinator: Charles Parker, California; Ronnie Simmons, Florida
- FFA Staff Consultant to Committee: Larry Gossen

2 Award an American Star Greenhand and Provide Resources for Beginning SAE Projects

Submitted by: Tennessee

- Committee Chair: Jay Adams, Oregon
- Committee Coordinator: Heather Dye, NV; Robin McLean, NJ
- FFA Staff Consultant to Committee: Jeff Papke

3 Provide Materials and Resources in both English and Spanish

Submitted by: Puerto Rico

- Committee Chair: Anna Marie Limbaugh, Idaho
- Committee Coordinators: Ann Horne, Arkansas
- FFA Staff Consultants to Committee: Mike Womochil

4 Increase Opportunities for Middle School Members

Submitted by: Iowa, Louisiana and Virginia

- Committee Chair: Kayla Shivar, North Carolina
- Committee Coordinator: John Ricketts, Georgia
- FFA Staff Consultant to Committee: Mike Honeycutt

5 Career Development Events Innovations and Process Evaluation

Submitted by: Iowa

- Committee Chair: Jeromie Allen, Missouri
- Committee Coordinator: Val Arsvold, Minnesota; Matt Koerner, Maryland
- FFA Staff Consultant to Committee: Jim Armbruster

6 Female Official Dress

Submitted by: Committee Created as a Result of a FFA Board of Directors Referral

- Committee Chair: Matt Dolch, Iowa
- Committee Coordinators: Alan Spencer, Iowa
- FFA Staff Consultants to Committee: Lee Anne Shiller

These issues were selected from 19 issues submitted by state associations. Delegates at State Presidents' Conference voted on the importance of each issue; from that vote the national officer team determined the top issues for consideration. National FFA President, Travis Jett, appointed a delegate committee for each of these issues to meet and develop recommendations at the 79th National FFA Convention.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Issue Committee #1: Start-Up Grants for New Chapters

Whereas,

The National FFA Organization would provide grants to aid in the establishment of new agricultural education programs/FFA chapters. This would aid in meeting the strategic goal of creating 10,000 quality agricultural education programs by the year 2015.

Be it resolved that the Start-Up Grants for New Chapters Committee recommends the following:

- There should be a flat rate of \$1,000 for each chapter.
- Make the grant a 50/50 program; 50 percent of the money goes toward the Blue & Gold Catalogs, and 50 percent goes toward their Ag program.
- States have the final discretion on use of the money, and will approve the efficient use of allocated funds.
- Add a grant application to the charter paperwork to be turned in to the state at the same time as being chartered.
- Chapters must spend the grant money within one year of receiving the money.

On behalf of committee members, this report respectfully submitted October 25, 2006, by:

Committee Chair: Sara Malaise of Idaho

This committee recommendation passed by a majority vote of the delegates.

Witnessed by committee secretaries: Andrew Barth of Washington
Kristi Badeaux of Louisiana

Issue Committee # 2: Provide resources for beginning SAE projects.

Whereas,

The committee to provide resources for beginning SAE projects committee recognizes the need for additional resources for beginning SAE projects,

Be it resolved that the Award an American Star Greenhand and Provide Resources for Beginning SAE Projects Committee recommends the following:

1. On the Issue to provide resources for beginning SAE projects, for the board to: advertise existing resources i.e., 55 grants already available and paper resources such as the Rev It Up kit.

On behalf of committee members, this report respectfully submitted October 25, 2006, by:

Committee Chair: Jay Adams of Oregon

Witnessed by committee secretaries: Sunny Wilcox of Arkansas
Sarah Burleson of Florida

Issue Committee #3: Provide Materials and Resources in both English and Spanish

Whereas,

The Spanish-speaking population of the world is growing; 330 million speak Spanish as their first language, with another 100 million speaking Spanish as a second language.

- States such as New York, Florida, Texas, California and New Mexico have a Hispanic student population of between 20 percent and 52 percent within their school systems, respectively.
- Within the National FFA Organization, 17 percent of the membership is of Hispanic descent.
- Spanish is expected to be the first language of 50 percent of the U.S. population within 50 years.

Individuals of Hispanic descent play a vital role in the success of the United States agriculture and natural resources industry. Increasing the opportunities and resources available to Hispanic FFA members will improve the quality of America's future leaders.

Be it resolved that the Provide Materials and Resources in both English and Spanish Committee recommends the following:

- A change in procedure of the National FFA Organization, in the following areas:
 - Translate the National website and other electronic materials, such as the National FFA Scholarship Book
 - Offer promotional and recruitment materials in Spanish as requested
- To request further research from the National FFA and industry experts in regards to the following:
 - Conduct a national survey of advisors, members and state staff to determine the need for additional printed Spanish resources, such as the New Horizons magazine and conference curriculum
 - Investigate grants and/or federal funding for making printed Spanish resources available, based upon the results of the survey
- Committee will have full power to act upon the results of both investigations

On behalf of committee members, this report respectfully submitted October 25, 2006, by:
Committee Chair: Anna Marie Limbaugh of Idaho

This committee recommendation passed by a majority vote of the delegates.

Witnessed by committee secretaries: Allison Toles of Rhode Island
Alyn Kiel of Michigan



Issue Committee #4: Middle School Membership Opportunities

Whereas,

The Middle School Membership Opportunities Committee was commissioned at the 2006 State Presidents' Conference in Washington, D.C.,

and Whereas,

2.6 percent of the 2005-2006 membership was 7th graders and 3.8 percent of the 2005-2006 membership was 8th graders,

and Whereas,

opportunities such as National Chapter Awards, Agriscience Fair, Agri-Entrepreneurship, H.O. Sargent Diversity Award, SAE Grants, Risk Management Essay Contest, Creed CDE, and EDGE leadership conference are already in place for middle school members at the national level,

and Whereas,

the only specific policy that directly mentions middle school participation in CDEs states that a student must be in the 9th grade at the time of certification for the CDE to participate at the national level.

Be it resolved that the Middle School Membership Opportunities Committee recommends the following:

That existing opportunities for middle school students (i.e., the EDGE leadership conference or other state-specific leadership events) be more extensively promoted by the National FFA Organization, and That this issue be referred to a task force commissioned by the National FFA Organization to investigate increased middle school opportunities. We would like for this task force to specifically consider the following suggestions:

Create new exploratory CDEs for middle school members at the national level such as a quiz bowl.

On behalf of committee members, this report respectfully submitted October 26, 2006, by:

Committee Chair: Kayla Shivar of North Carolina

This committee recommendation passed by a majority vote of the committee.

Witnessed by committee secretaries: Brandon Smith of Alabama

Amanda McDonald of Mississippi



Issue Committee #5: Career Development Event Innovations

Whereas,

A current process of CDE implementation and review is currently outlined in National FFA Board Policy;

The national FFA Board of Directors is expected to be proactive in developing new or initiating changes within existing Career Development Events

The delegate committee feels a wide range of Career Clusters and skills are represented in current Career Development Events

Be it resolved that the CDE Innovation Committee recommends the following:

States who wish to see specific new CDEs at a national level, should, according to National FFA Board Policy, take a proactive role in forming a 15-state task force to develop a proposal for a new career development event to be reviewed and studied by the National FFA Board of Directors.

The National FFA Board, during evaluation of current national Career Development Events, should review not only CDE content, but also participation numbers and feasibility.

The National FFA Board clarify the current Board Policy in the elimination and/or possible integration of CDEs on a national level.

On behalf of committee members, this report respectfully submitted October 26, 2006, by:

Committee Chair: Jeromie Allen of Missouri

This committee recommendation passed by Majority vote of the delegates.

Witnessed by committee secretaries: Morgan Parker of Colorado
Michelle Keno of Washington

Issue Committee #6: Female Official Dress

Whereas,

The National Board of Directors required that a Female Official Dress Committee be formed at National Convention, and

Whereas,

The Female Official Dress Committee analyzed the issue of females wearing skirts or slacks as a part of Official Dress, and

Whereas,

The Official FFA Manual already states that "Black Slacks may be appropriate for traveling and outdoor activities."

Be it resolved that the Female Official Dress Committee recommends the following:

We strongly recommend No change to current female official dress language as listed in the Official FFA Manual.

On behalf of committee members, this report respectfully submitted October 26, 2006, by:

Committee Chair: Matt Dolch of Iowa

This committee recommendation passed by a majority vote of the delegates.

Witnessed by committee secretaries: Elyse Brodeur of Connecticut
Dan Delcher of New Jersey
Jenna Guidry of Arkansas

LIST OF DELEGATES

Alabama

Matt Barton
Caleb Colquitt
Brittney Rawlinson
Bailey Wright
Kimberly Henderson
Justin Posey
Tia Gail Bush
Joanna Stewart
Jenika Buttram
Travis McGowin
Brandon Smith
Dexter Vines

Nathan Tapp
Jenna Guidry
Cameron Jernigan

California

Sam Baker
Vernon Clark
Nessie Early
David Jones
Robert Lopez-Calvert
Kevin O'Connor
Diana Paasch
Amanda Shuminsky



Alaska

Mara Burley
Hannah Harrison

Arizona

Brittany Choate
Amanda Webb
Stacey Healy
Laura Stump
Robyn Ollerton

Arkansas

Tasha Daniels
Chris Scarborough
Kaitlin Mitchell
Sunny Wilcox
Crystal Ahrens
Jake Whisenant
Chelsey Ahrens
Cadie Brown
Jackie Small

Justin Zacharias
Ryan Amaral
Jonathan Challacomb
Jessica Chamberlain
Corey Ann Duysen
Josiah Groeneweg
Jace Knight
Jimmy Pierce
Michelle Spoelstra
Graham Blagg
Claire Brumley
Leticia Campuzano
Michelle Jimenez
Cinda Mattrocce
Robin Nagele
Stephanie Obad
Ellie Titus
Katie Driver
Blake Dunlap
Mandy Hill
Matthew Johnson
Keiko Osumi

Brittany Parham
Abigail Ryan
Bradley Wright
Emmalee Barlett
Beatriz Campuzano
Jordan Dixon
Sienna Fry
Jesse Garcia
Kody Kester
Levy Randolph
Kristen Steves
James Young
Danielle Groteguth
Britny Hewett
Hayley Loehr
Brittany Niece-King
Amy Norton
Kelsey Rugai
Natalie Ryan
Kaytlin Smith
Samantha Williams

Georgia

Will Godowns
Billy Howell
Melissa Jones
Brandi Saxon
Stacia Bennett
Lou Boone
Laura Hatcher
Chris Hewett
Scott Barron
Meghan Gafnea
Casey Wyman
Hannah Findley
Justin Hand
Dana Purcell
Ward Black
Raymond Fitzpatrick
Deana Veal
Sean Blankenship
Regina Holliday
Janet Jones

Colorado

Joe Christensen
Curt Dutro
Andrea Knodel
Abby Frank
Morgan Parker
Lindsay Capowich
Johanna Wertz
Sarah Davis
Elyse Brodeur

Delaware

Justin Bailey
Sara Busker
Briana Hargett

Florida

Joshua Cribbs
Karent Vincent
Sarah Burleson
Hannah Huggins
Jaime Spivey
Joe Guevara
Michael Rogalsky
Hilary Webb
Bernie LeFils
Brady Revels
Becca Hamilton
Ashley Young
Kelli Hamilton
Lauren Lewis

Idaho

Sara Malaise
Ian James Bridges
Anna Marie Limbaugh
Ott Clark
Whitney Plant

Illinois

Stephanie Aves
Wyatt McGrew
Kaitlin Weitekamp
Grace Bell
Megan Ott
Amy Davis
Taryn Pfeiffer
Matt Deal
Patrick Holland
Tannor Spittler
Erica Frye
Sam Meteer
Brad Pilcher
Mallory Daugherty
Cassie Hart

Indiana

Morgan Emery
Desiray Simmons
Rob Hays
Kim Hoeing
Laura Bradford

Jamie Steiner
Elise Brown
AJ Haskins
Tyler Tenbarge

Iowa

Casey Kent
Jennifer Paulus
Brittney Morris
Ryan Borcharding
Brent Koller
Mary Irlbeck
Jennifer Leistikow
Matt Dolch
Gabriel Twedt

Kansas

Jackie Klenda
Leann Spinden
Ashley Guenther
Dalton Henry
Becky Sullivan
Carly Whorton

Kentucky

Derek Adams
Emily London
Amy White
Coleman Hurt
Celeste Laurent
Emily Harned
Susan Kuegel
Holli Patton
Matthew Whitaker
Kelly O'Connor
Joey Spencer
Randy Adams
Magen Roberts

Louisiana

Kristi Badeaux
Chris Harris
Justin Bardwell
Brittani Davis
Brandon LeJeune
Walter Broussard
Jacob Landry
Samantha Lirette

Maine

Emily Kiesewetter
Shannon Svodboda

Maryland

Cole Bishop
Andrea Kneer
Annie DeLauter

Massachusetts

Ashley Hill
Wylie Scalise
Caitlin Brigham

Michigan

Danielle Martinez
Anna Marie Timmerman
Alyn Kiel
Henry Reinart
Katie Eldred
Emily Ries

Minnesota

Ann Miron
Brad Lanoue
Chris Sheehan
Amber Siebert
Pam Dahlman
Kayla Pearson
Jessica Nettet
Londa Johnson

Mississippi

Brandon Roberts
Kayla Williamson
Heather Ferguson
Amanda McDonald
Jason Camp

Missouri

Wesley Davis
Kelin Kruse
Reanna Santillan
Nathan Scheiderer
Joshua Cawthon
Mark Engemann
Lance Martin
Rachel Bartholomew
Alex Johnson
Allie Massa
Zach Kinne
Amanda Parrack
Jeromie Allen
Mindy Breshears
Andrea Pruet

Rachael Keathley
Tracy Sample

Montana

Willie Grundhauser
Molly Fisher
Sara Schledewitz
Jessica Kirschten

Nebraska

Dustin Romshek
Reid Ely
Bret Herndon
Chelsea Heidbrink

Chanz Robbins
Cole Andes
Melissa Augustine
Paul Moya

New York

Sarah Hulick
Allyson Jones-Brimmer
Samuel Fessenden
Lucas Fuess

North Carolina

Chris Bell
Jenna Bunton



Kurt Heideman
Ellen Leibbrandt
Houston Moseman

Nevada

Seth McDaniel
Amanda Vesco
Jenna Frey

New Hampshire

Morgan Parker
Caitlin Cox
Megan Lisay

New Jersey

Alison Keggan
Alyssa Mottram
Dan Delcher

New Mexico

Brandon Sours

Scott Lloyd
Claudia Johnson
Daniel Locklear
Mathew Cook
Brittney Parker
Stephanie Weavil
Brian Gordon
Kayla Shivar
Katelin Smith
Kristen Hartgrove
Robert Layton
Leigh Ane Dalley
Caitlin Lowe

North Dakota

Jon Leadbetter
Benjamin Seidler
Jessie Hendrickson
Lucas Vangsness
Sarah Perry

LIST OF DELEGATES

Ohio

Katie Croft
Hannah Crossen
Maria Goubeaux
Esther Mast
Renee Gerber
Abby Snyder
Amanda Hill
Dustin Homan
Lucas Shammo
Callie Crum
Hannah Lemle
JD Bethel
Stacie Wenig

Oklahoma

Katie Scott
Arthur Summer
Jared Crain
Laila Hajji
Paige Booth
Austin Akins
Megan Maxey
Travis Schnaithman

Scott Umble
Zach Biddle
Tyler Rice
Matthew File
Kelly Over
Eric Beiler

Puerto Rico

Roy Rodriguez
Albert Troche
Rosimar Rios
Surey Miranda

Rhode Island

Allison Toles
Abbie Whitford

South Carolina

Allen Wright
Katie McCannon
Lara Boyd
Ashton Berry
Tyler Brown
Amanda Hiott



Oregon

Ruth Corn
Jay Adams
Anneke Tucker
Kiel Woodward
Kaci Sintek

South Dakota

Kyi Zenk
Melanie Koehlmoos
Matt Tollefson
Laurie Zubke
Dani Herring

Pennsylvania

Paul Druckenmiller
Sarah Wickard

Tennessee

Clint Crisp
Kris Newsom

Katie Newbern
Jeffrey Turner
Ashley Amsden
Matthew McBride
Austin Stone
Leann Little
Michelle Mullins
Rachel Hendrix
Ryan Inman
Stuart Watson

Texas

Riley Branch
Emily Browning
Kody Graves
Heather Hendrick
Derek Koster
Kyle Polk
Justin Self
Tyler Yaklin
Mitchell Bradford
Kaci Clark
Haley Dick
Lana Garnett
Ilissa Nolan
Sarah Novak
Dan Patterson
Isaac Serna
Kristen Stewart
Wesley Bissett
Cole Bolton
Cheyanne Choate
Berry Clinton
Andrew McNair
Casey Page
Paige Robinson
Kyle Seymour
Ann Banduch
Will Echols
Samantha Gathright
Jeffrey Jones
Amanda Mason
Jett Mason
Rani Reynolds
Grant Bitner
Allison Fisher
Jodi Gillespie
Tatum Gun
Tyler Handrick
Padon Holt
Philip Ireland
Rebecca McEndree
Brandon O'Quinn

Rusti Cochran
Kelsey Fletcher
Olivia Fouse
Sarah Beth Grover
Jade Keith
Brent Richardson
Chris Schofield
Tyler Treptow

Utah

Zane Christensen
Shane Schoffield
Jarvis Pace
Lauren Davies
Camille Rose

Vermont

Robyn Berno
Ashley Severy

Virginia

Steven Burgoyne
Laura Neff
Greta Brumback
Kymberly Hammer
Ashley Pitsenbarger
Amanda Weakley
Will Earhart
Josh Holland
Laura Sutphin
Mary Slavick

Washington

Andy Barth
Brianna Oas
Bridget Slaybaugh
Caroline Mann
Brooke Ann Ann Cole
Michelle Keno
David Dobbins

West Virginia

Sarah Hopkins
Patrick Parsons
Adam Judy
Angela Fisher
Cody Dent
Danielle Kisamore

Wisconsin

Ross Bender

Michael Poradek
Bridget Klinkner
Jessica Berger
Adam Geiger
Patrick Harker
Leonard Polzin
Katie Falch
Kenneth Lezvow
Emily Treu
Andrew Christenson
Melissa Ploeckelman
Sean VanderWaal
Bridget Bork
Jenny Breuer

Wyoming

Ryan Farthing
Brittany Epler
Justin Chamberlain



Nominating Committee Members

- Jennifer Peters, NC
- Monica Coker, AR
- Mallory Daugherty, IL
- Sara Riggs, KY
- Matt Anderson, WI
- Whitney Danker, OK
- Paige Haugland, ND
- Blaze Currie, TX
- Daniel Bays, CA



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATES

Forty one FFA members vied for the six national officer spots at this year's national FFA convention. The candidates were interviewed by an appointed committee of peers during the 79th National FFA Convention. The selection process was designed in two phases. Candidates will be evaluated on their application, a written test, two writing exercises and five interview rounds.

The interview rounds included one-on-one interviews, delivering a speech, facilitating a workshop, round robin interviews and a personal interview round.

List of national officer candidates:

Alabama

Jennifer Himburg

Alaska

Jessica Nolin

Arizona

Janette Barnard

Arkansas

Jason Davis

California

Beau Williamson

Colorado

Jamie Cecil

Connecticut

Amy Czaja

Delaware

Christina Gallant

Florida

Melissa Hinton

Hawaii

Denna Macanas

Idaho

Tyler Zollinger

Illinois

Kacy Baugher

Iowa

Ryan Stien

Kansas

Sarah Sexton

Kentucky

Coty Back

Maine

Darick Williams

Maryland

Julie Roop

Massachusetts

Peter Malionek

Michigan

Aaron Preston

Minnesota

Christian Lillenthal

Missouri

Miranda Leppin

Nebraska

Ryan Hassebrook

New York

Dustin Bliss

Nevada

Ty Smith

North Carolina

Emma Davis

North Dakota

Brooke Jameson

Ohio

Rose Dudgeon

Oklahoma

Jarrod Johnson

Oregon

Kara Palacio

Pennsylvania

Mark Lowery

Puerto Rico

Jeffrey Aquino

South Carolina

Josh O'Rear

South Dakota

Holly Marshall

Tennessee

Jessica Jarrell

Texas

Robert Henson

Utah

Morgan Perry

Virginia

Christy Huffman

Washington

Greg Reilly

West Virginia

Charles Brent Wellings

Wisconsin

Michael Stranz

Wyoming

Jessie Berry



NEW NATIONAL OFFICERS

The 2006-2007 National Officer team was elected during the final session of the 79th National FFA Convention.

➤ **Beau Williamson** from California will lead a whole new slate of student officers in the coming year. Serving with Williamson will be: Kacy Baugher, Illinois, Secretary; Janette Barnard, Arizona, Western Region Vice President; Jamie Cecil, Colorado, Central Region Vice President; Jennifer Himburg, Alabama, Southern Region Vice President; and Coty Back, Kentucky; Eastern Region Vice President.

Beau Williamson, the son of Scott and Dianne Williamson, believes that everything happens for a reason. In the next year, FFA members are sure to learn at least one reason Williamson was elected national FFA president—he has an incredible passion for helping students reach their highest potential.

A student at California State University - Fresno, this Clovis FFA Chapter member has presented leadership conferences for first-year FFA and FCCLA members. He is also involved in the Meats Science Club and National Junior Swine Association. His FFA advisor is Susan Henderson.

As an FFA member, Williamson's Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) was based in Breeding Swine, Market Swine and Breeding Rabbits and placement in a meats lab and on a swine farm. He won honors through participation in Meats Evaluation and Technology, Marketing and public speaking CDEs. He was also named Star Chapter Farmer, was a State Star Farmer finalist and national proficiency finalist in small animal production and care.

"The greatest accomplishments in life are those where every possible thing that could be done, was done because the people involved took full advantage of every moment and seized every opportunity," Williamson said. "That is exactly what I wish to do this year as a national officer: take full advantage of every opportunity to make a difference and to serve this organization with all my heart."

➤ Growing up in Frenchburg, a small Kentucky town with a population of 550, **Coty Back** gained an understanding of what it's like to be overlooked and underappreciated. It also inspired him to look for ways to help struggling students and organizations realize their full potential. The Menifee County High School FFA

Chapter member will now have a chance to inspire students across the nation. He is the son of Mark and Rhonda Back, and his advisor is Tim Adams.

A student at Western Kentucky University, Back is a member of the Western Kentucky University Collegiate FFA chapter, Farmhouse Fraternity and the Agriculture Business Club, which he helped rebuild .

As an FFA member, Back completed his Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) by assisting with training and breeding programs at a Tennessee Walking Horse farm. He received several regional public speaking and parliamentary procedure awards. He was awarded his state FFA organization's Outstanding Leadership Award and was elected state FFA vice president in 2005.

"I want to not only meet the individuals who are instrumental to our organization, I want to truly get to know them," Back said. "I want to empower them and make them realize that they can truly do anything, despite the obstacles before them."



▶ **Jamie Cecil** is thankful for her upbringing on a fourth generation family farm in Colorado. Her experiences have fueled her passions for working hard and serving others. The Arickaree High School FFA Chapter member will be doing a lot of both in the coming year. She is the daughter of Jim and Vickie Cecil, and her advisor is Allen Charles. A student at Northeastern Junior College, Cecil serves as a 2nd Vice President in the Associated Student Government and is a member of the Concert and Jazz Choir and Phi Theta Kappa .

As an FFA member, Cecil's Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) consisted of two enterprises: beef production and crop (dry land wheat) production. She won chapter, regional and state awards in several CDEs, including Prepared Public Speaking, Extemporaneous Public Speaking and Agricultural Sales. She served as her chapter's reporter, secretary and vice president and was elected a Colorado State Vice President in 2005.

"Service is a choice and the decision to serve starts in my heart," Cecil said. "I hope to help FFA members discover that no matter how small an act of service, they can make a difference."



▶ **Kacy Baugher** knows from her experiences that FFA is an incredible organization. In the next year, she will help other students see the many professional and personal growth opportunities it has to offer. The Windsor High School FFA Chapter member from Illinois was named the 2006-2007 National FFA Secretary. She is the daughter of Greg and Rosemary Baugher, and her advisors are Julie Niemerg and Betsy Bakken.

A student at the University of Illinois, Baugher serves as Membership Chair for Sigma Alpha Professional Agricultural Sorority and is a member of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences Student Advancement Committee.

As an FFA member, Baugher's Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) was based in Agricultural Communications, Turf Grass Management and Agricultural Sales. She won top honors in many state-level CDEs, such as Parliamentary Procedure, Poultry Judging and Electrical Wiring, and finished in the top 16 in the national prepared public speaking CDE. She has also served as secretary of a national FFA delegate committee and was named one of the top five section presidents in her state.

"I will serve FFA because I truly believe it impacts lives, and that I can contribute to its future success," Baugher said.



▶ Many people think that FFA and agricultural education is all about growing crops. For Alabama's **Jennifer Himburg**, it is about growing as a citizen and a leader. The Ariton High School FFA Chapter member's leadership skills and passion for service are sure to continue growing in the coming year. She is the daughter of John and Elaine Himburg, and her advisor is Dr. Joel Snell.

A student at Auburn University, Himburg serves as a College of Agriculture Ambassador and as Director of Public Relations for Delta Gamma. She is also a member of Auburn's Collegiate FFA chapter. As an FFA member, Himburg's Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) was in Agricultural Sales and Marketing for an agricultural commodity transportation company, a nursery and the Alabama Cooperative Extension Office. She was named outstanding chapter member four times and received a chapter scholarship. She also was a top participant in several district public speaking contests.

"FFA has shown me that by instilling positive values in young individuals, we create a generation that will sustain and carry our nation forward for years to come," Himburg said. "Serving as a national officer will allow me to help students develop and learn lessons that will guide them throughout their lives."



By working with sheep on her family's Arizona farm, **Janette Barnard** learned that purposeful effort, care and attention builds a good flock. Those same principles will serve her well in the coming year as she works to educate and inspire FFA members across the country. The Willcox FFA Chapter member was named the 2006-2007 National FFA Western Region Vice President. She is the daughter of Virgil and Helen Barnard, and her advisor is Clint Sanborn.



A student at the University of Arizona, Barnard serves as an Ambassador for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and for the Arizona National Livestock Show. She also is the co-chairperson of the UA Student Leadership Committee and is a member of the Sigma Alpha Professional Agricultural Sorority.

As an FFA member, Barnard's Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) was in sheep production and Agricultural Education. She received her state association's sheep proficiency award and agriculture education proficiency award and was a State Star Farmer finalist. She also participated in many CDEs at the state level, including parliamentary procedure, extemporaneous public speaking, livestock judging and agronomy.

"Through FFA, I have seen many opportunities available to dive in and make a difference," Barnard said. "I am very excited to pursue this special opportunity and be a part of helping students develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success."

The officers were selected from among forty-one members vying for national office. They will serve as ambassadors for the agriculture industry and represent FFA and its members for the following year. The national FFA officer selection process is intense and includes a rigorous assessment of each candidate's years of academic and extracurricular accomplishments. Nominees must first qualify at the state level to represent their state FFA associations. They then submit an in-depth application to the national organization, detailing their accomplishments and contributions to the community, and completing an essay explaining why they wish to be elected to the position. Once at the convention, candidates participate in five rounds of interviews, take an in-depth written test on the organization and agricultural topics and complete two writing exercises. A nominating committee, composed of nine state FFA officers, recommends the slate of six national officers for approval by the convention delegates.



MEMBERS HONORED AT AMERICAN FFA DEGREE RECEPTION

“...there are more precious laurels to be won in our organization...the golden key of the American FFA Degree await those earn it...it is our hope that you reach these higher goals in our organization...”

For the first time ever, Indianapolis was host to the new American FFA Degree Recognition Reception. This year a staggering 3,055 FFA members received the highest honor that the National FFA Organization can bestow. Only one half of one percent of the national FFA membership meets the extensive requirements to receive their American FFA Degree.



National PAS Vice President Vicki Pitts greeted the audience with warm wishes. “This is just the first step for you in the rest of your life,” Pitts said. “We wish you all good luck in reaching your peak of success, no matter what your peak may be.” Master of Ceremonies and former national FFA officer Andrew McCrea; National FFA Alumni President-Elect, Norman Gay; and Indiana Young Farmers Association State President, Dawn Davis were also present to honor the recipients of the American FFA Degree and their families.

Country musician and motivational speaker Michael Peterson shared his story of hardship and success. According to Peterson, one of the most important things in life is perception: “When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.” The former Country Music Association award winner also challenged the degree recipients to be successful. “It is choice, not change that determines your future,” he explained. “You have the chance to be successful, but your question should not be, ‘How can I be successful?’ It should be, ‘How can I be valuable?’” Peterson appearance was sponsored by New Holland as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The feelings among the award recipients were similar—many expressed feelings of satisfaction and completion. “Receiving my American FFA Degree is the culmination of the past years of hard work and determination,” Ledyard Regional, Connecticut FFA member Sarah LaRose commented. Others commented on the knowledge of accomplishment. Caitlin Leu of the Prairie Heights, Indiana FFA chapter said, “You can now take the knowledge you’ve gained through FFA and exert that to the rest of your life.”

Receiving the American FFA Degree is not only an honor for the students; many of their advisors, parents, grandparents, and siblings joined in the celebration as well. “I feel blessed to have wonderful students that have achieved great things,” stated Cathy Dugar, advisor of two American FFA Degree recipients from Sierra Nevada, Nevada FFA chapter.



AMERICAN DEGREE RECIPIENTS

Wyoming

Jessie Atkinson
Casper FFA

ReGina M. Barton
Wind River FFA

Eric Baures
Casper FFA

Jessie Rae Berry
Cheyenne Frontier FFA

Justin Chamberlain
Casper FFA

Brian D. Eardley
Jim Bridger FFA

James Duke Eardley
Jim Bridger FFA

Tanya Hamner
Lyman FFA

Kyle S. Hansen
Casper FFA

Jamie D'Lyn Hart
Thermopolis FFA

Ken Lym
Jim Bridger FFA

Shawn M. Milek
Thermopolis FFA

Heidi Murray
Encampment FFA

Laura Nelson
Pine Bluffs FFA

Lander Vale Nicodemus
High Plains FFA

Bryan Overy
Jim Bridger FFA

Rita Palm
Bow River FFA

James Roberts
Douglas FFA

Devin Jerome Schinzel
Pine Bluffs FFA

Caleb Vercimak
Jim Bridger FFA

Wisconsin

Andrew John Adams
Badger FFA

Derick R. Alsum
Randolph-Cambria
Friesland FFA

Tara Jo Ambrose
Amherst FFA

Mike Baker
Tomah FFA

Cory Bazille
Glenwood City FFA

Shawn Behnke
Reedsville FFA

Chris Bennett
Brodhead FFA

Melissa Beyer
Freedom FFA

Sadie Lynn Binversie
Kiel FFA

Jacob Emil Blaha
Independence FFA

Matthew S. Bobiak
Pardeeville FFA

Dave Boettcher
Reedsville FFA

Matthew Borneman
Antigo FFA

Jenny Breuer
Slinger FFA

Tony Brey
Southern Door FFA

Megan M. Cerny
Big Foot FFA

Mike Chappel
Independence FFA

Carmen M. Check
Milton FFA

Heather Cherney
Reedsville FFA

Michelle Claussen
Waupaca FFA

Jacob H. Cramer
Johnson Creek FFA

Nicholas Dallmann
Brillion FFA

Brenda A. Davis
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Jason J. De Vries
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Jenna Dean
Mineral Point FFA

Sarah Deavers
West De Pere FFA

Braden Dickinsen
Augusta FFA

Michael L. Dogs
Mayville FFA

Justin Reynolds Doyle
Mineral Point FFA

Ryan D. Ebert
Rio FFA

Justin Eckel
Unity FFA

Mark Elmhurst
Granton FFA

Joseph D. Erdenberger
River Ridge FFA

Steven D. Erdman
Augusta FFA

Holly Joy Farrington
Pardeeville FFA

Eric G. Faul
Iowa-Grant FFA

Dan Filla
Independence FFA

Alan Fischer
Reedsville FFA

Luke Garett Fitzsimmons
Mineral Point FFA

Branden Furseth
Stoughton FFA

William A. Gaastra
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Jessica Lynn Gehrke
Badger FFA

Laura M. Giese
Beaver Dam FFA

Mclain Gill
Reedsville FFA

Megan M. Glazewski
Johnson Creek FFA

Jason M. Gleiter
Mondovi FFA

Jeremiah Gorne
Unity FFA

Matthew M. Gutzman
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Tyler Gutzman-Meyer
Plymouth FFA

Ashley Haelfrisch
Brillion FFA

Jeffrey A. Hagedorn
Shell Lake FFA

Travis Charles Hakes
Bloomer FFA

Ian Hall
Prairie Farm FFA

Lucinda L. Halvorson
Lincoln Alma Center-
Humbird-Merrillan FFA

Isaac Edward Hanks
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Joell Jane Henken
Waupun FFA

Craig Hitchcock
Sauk Prairie FFA

Micah A. Holtan
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Michael Horn
Brillion FFA

Jarred Huber
Melrose-Mindoro FFA

Andy Huebner
Unity FFA

Adam Huibregtse
Plymouth FFA

Jeff Jaderborg
Spooner FFA

Ginger James
Darlington FFA

Samantha Ann Johnson
Waupaca FFA

Randy Kidder
Shell Lake FFA

Frances Kinnard
Southern Door FFA

Katie Klessig
Brillion FFA

Bridget Klinkner
Cashton FFA

Peter Andrew Kolpack
Barron FFA

Tanya J. Konkol
Amherst FFA

Brian J. Kowald
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Greg Kramer
Cochrane-Fountain City
FFA

Benjamin J. Larson
Beaver Dam FFA

Alyson F. Leahy
Shullsburg FFA

Craig Steven LeFevre
Denmark FFA

Thomas B. Lind
Weyauwega-Fremont FFA

Patrick Carl Luck
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Melisa Luebstorff
Waupaca FFA

Laura Louise Maier-Richter
Fennimore FFA

Becky Martin
Fennimore FFA

Ashley Mateske
Montello FFA

Paula J. Matuszak
Pulaski FFA

John L. McCollam
Brookwood FFA

Mark Patrick Meagher
Waupun FFA

Leonard Lloyd Polzin
Cadott FFA

Sean Prust
Marshall FFA

Joshua D. Quade
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Crystal Ann Rakestraw
Stanley-Boyd FFA

Peggy Leigh Ramsey
Pardeeville FFA

Kyle A. Reed
Black Hawk FFA

Lindley Reilly
Plymouth FFA

Matthew T. Repinski
Amherst FFA

Maureen R. Repinski
Amherst FFA

Derek Gene Rosenstiel
Black Hawk FFA

Kurt M. Ruiter
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Danielle E. Russell
Shullsburg FFA



Tiffany K. Mickelson
Whitehall FFA

Dale Alan Miemietz
Independence FFA

Dan Minick
Rio FFA

Phillip M. Monson
Brodhead FFA

Breana Ohlemiller
Waupun FFA

Chad Olsen
Tomah FFA

Sarah Olsen
Tomah FFA

Dawn Nichole Olson
Fort Atkinson FFA

Isaac Eli Oshefsky
Denmark FFA

Peter T. Ostrowski
Amherst FFA

Callie Ott
Brillion FFA

Karl L. Parsons
Antigo FFA

Tyler J. Paul
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Mark Paulsen
Orfordville Parkview FFA

Benjamin John Polzin
Cadott FFA

Kelsey J. Samsb
Fort Atkinson FFA

Lacey Leigh Schreurs
Wittenberg-Birnamwood
FFA

Elishah Schroeder
Antigo FFA

Eric Schroeder
Cambridge FFA

David Schultz
Unity FFA

Jason Robert Schultz
Waupun FFA

Mark L. Schultz
Black Hawk FFA

Ashley Sendelbach
Evansville FFA

Carrie M. Shippy
Black Hawk FFA

Emilie Siverling
Bloomer FFA

Jared Siverling
Bloomer FFA

Nicole Skroch
Whitehall FFA

Ross D. Stansbury
Glenwood City FFA

Erin Steinmetz
Bloomer FFA

AMERICAN DEGREE RECIPIENTS

Ryan Stenjem
Cambridge FFA

Amie L. Stillman
Weyauwega-Fremont FFA

Deven John Stychzynski
Gillett FFA

Elizabeth D. Tesch
Colby FFA

Daniel Thorman
Watertown FFA

Justin Tibbits
Mineral Point FFA

Zachary A. Tiry
Stanley-Boyd FFA

Daniel Travis
Big Foot FFA

Ryan P. Ullom
Shell Lake FFA

Joseph Vande Burgt
Brillion FFA

Eva Vangen
Rio FFA

Shawn Wagner
Gillett FFA

Matt James Wavrunek
Denmark FFA

Nicholas M. Weinberger
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Ross M. Weinert
Bruce FFA

Jaclyn Suzanne Weis
Parkview FFA

Dalice Welke
Montello FFA

Kelly Marie Wellnitz
Brodhead FFA

Donald Wendlandt III
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

Mitch R. Wirth
Prairie Farm FFA

Benjamin T. Wojcik
Spencer FFA

Matthew Wormer
Prairie Farm FFA

Justin R. Zander
Randolph-Cambria-
Friesland FFA

West Virginia

Richard W. Baker Jr.
Hampshire County FFA

Andrew Boone
Ritchie County FFA

Kristen N. Casto
Ripley FFA

Jonathan Dennis Funk
Moorefield FFA

Stacey Renee Gleason
Ripley FFA

Isaac Ervin Godlove III
East Hardy FFA

Danielle Karen Hall
Ripley FFA

Stacy Dawn Hartman
Pendleton County FFA

Christopher Michael
Hawver
Greenbrier FFA

Benjamin Wayne Heavner
Pendleton County FFA

Brianne Jankowski
Roane County FFA

Kyle M. Kaufman
Wood Co Tech Ctr
Blennerhasset FFA

Cassie Ann Mallow
Pendleton County FFA

Kellen Denise McNutt
Roane County FFA

Amanda Renee Nicewarner
Jefferson FFA

Joseph Adam Ours
Pendleton County FFA

Stephen Andrew Ring
Jefferson FFA

Daniel W. Swecker
Pendleton County FFA

Amber R. Taylor
Ripley FFA

Jonathan Taylor
Petersburg FFA

Patrick Thompson
Pendleton County FFA

William Rodney Tomlin II
Ripley FFA

Jeffrey P. Whitacre
Hampshire County FFA

Thomas Wilsoncroft
Liberty FFA

John Ashley Workman
Roane County FFA

Washington

Richard Adams
Prosser FFA

Jessica Christine Anderson
Winlock FFA

Kacie Anderson
Winlock FFA

Lindsey Nicolle Anderson
Yelm FFA

Jake Bredstrand
Evergreen FFA

Randi J. Brott
Asotin FFA

Kimberly C. Clouse
Asotin FFA

Amber Rae DeHaan
Lynden FFA

Tiffany Dawn Dix
Rochester FFA

Cedric F. Easley
Chelan FFA

Abigail L. Gavette
Lynden FFA

Sarah Kristina Giebel
North Kitsap FFA

Andra Gilbertson
Winlock FFA

Louis A. Gillespie III
Yelm FFA

Matt Hayter
Prosser FFA

Colt J. Heger
Asotin FFA

Kyle E. Higginbotham
Almira/Coulee-Hartline
FFA

Megan Ann Kunde
Yelm FFA

Janae L. Moss
Asotin FFA

Craig Mounts
Yelm FFA

Amanda Ocheltree
Yelm FFA

Kimberly Pfitzer
Omak FFA

Danielle R. Reynolds
Winlock FFA

Joshua D. Robison
Chelan FFA

Darla Sheppard
Odessa FFA

Joanna Shore
Yelm FFA

Bridget Slaybaugh
Pomeroy FFA

Bennett V. Tjoelker
Lynden FFA

Ashlee M. Witters
Asotin FFA

Virginia

Lauren Allen
Buffalo Gap FFA

Jason Anderton
Lakeland FFA

Dixie Boyd
Sherando FFA

Drew Britt
Buffalo Gap FFA

Jeff Glover Buchanan
Riverheads FFA

Paul Leshar Burgess
Broadway FFA

Hannah Burtner
Buffalo Gap FFA

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Bluestone FFA

Kyley Ann Clevenger
James Wood FFA

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Caroline FFA

Kyle Cromer
Buffalo Gap FFA

Aaron Andrew Crowgey
George Wythe FFA

Andrew Dellinger
Stonewall Jackson FFA

John W. Dellinger
Stonewall Jackson FFA

Benjamin K. Easley
Chatham FFA

Joseph Albert Epperly
Smith Mountain FFA

Addison Scott Flory
Pulaski FFA

Byron Fulk
Turner Ashby FFA

Chad Alan Funkhouser
Turner Ashby FFA

Levi Gore
Sherando FFA

Josh Graham
Christiansburg FFA

Robert Grogg
Buffalo Gap FFA

Daniel Meade Hardesty
Clarke County FFA

Sarah Jo Helms
Carroll County FFA

Kortni Kaye Henderlite
Sherando FFA

Amy Jo Hoback
George Wythe FFA

Matthew Carlyle Hobbs
Abingdon FFA

Michael Kearnes
Turner Ashby FFA

Benjamin King
Broadway FFA

Derrick Kyger
Spotswood FFA

Steven Marcum
Lee County FFA

Brandon Lee Martin
Abingdon FFA

Steven Douglas Mason
Carroll County FFA

Shawna Lynn Massie
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Rural Retreat FFA

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Fort Defiance FFA

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Turner Ashby FFA

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Central FFA

Casey Owens
Central FFA

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Fort Defiance FFA

Ashley Pitsenbarger
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Tunstall FFA

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Tunstall FFA

Brett Wightman
Central FFA

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Tyler Wright
Stuarts Draft FFA
Vermont

Tyler Adam Chelsia Mason
Lake Region FFA

Utah

Callahan Kate Adams
Delta FFA

Cameron Kirk Adams
North Summit FFA

Kasi Alley
Sky View FFA

Alese Anderson
Spanish Fork FFA

Mindy Atkinson
South Summit FFA

Jay Bartholomew
Gunnison Valley FFA

Jesse Mae Baxter
Bear River FFA

Kyleen Beckstead
Lehi FFA

Derek Black
Grantsville FFA

Stephanie Boore
Gunnison Valley FFA

Amber Brasher
Emery FFA

Josh Burr
Fremont FFA

Jessica Ann Burton
Bear River FFA

Justin Carlile
Wasatch FFA

Cagen D. Carter
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Jeffery Keith Catron
Manila FFA

Rowdy Justin Chadwick
Lone Peak FFA

Marlynn Chew
Uintah FFA

Glen Christensen
Richfield FFA

Jason Clark
Morgan FFA

Melinda Clinger
Payson FFA

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Lehi FFA

Jameson Stephen Eldredge
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Payson FFA

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Pleasant Grove FFA
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Lehi FFA
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Payson FFA
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Bear River FFA
Clint Jensen
Box Elder FFA
Steven Jensen
Spanish Fork FFA
Ruston Jensen
Richfield FFA
Shelly Kap
Fremont FFA
Hayley Kelly
Wasatch FFA
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Fremont FFA
Colby Law
Sky View FFA
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Lone Peak FFA
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Morgan FFA
Angie McMullin
Payson FFA
Sadie McPherson
Delta FFA
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Bear River FFA
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Spanish Fork FFA
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Spanish Fork FFA
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Lone Peak FFA
Casey Olsen
Manila FFA
Chrissy Jo Pace
North Summit FFA
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Fremont FFA
Morgan Elizabeth Perry
Payson FFA
Tyler Peterson
Richfield FFA
Adam Price
North Summit FFA
Jana Provost
Wasatch FFA
Alison Pulham
Lone Peak FFA
Jedidiah Chris Reeder
Box Elder FFA

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Monticello FFA
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Spanish Fork FFA
McKell D. Robbins
Payson FFA
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Lehi FFA
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Payson FFA
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Riverton FFA
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Bear River FFA
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Riverton FFA
Colby Smith
Lehi FFA
Rebecca Smith
Bear River FFA
Jennifer Spackman
Fremont FFA
Chase Steele
Payson FFA
Brooke Stringham
Davis FFA
Jill Swenson
Payson FFA
Brandon C. Wall
Payson FFA
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Lone Peak FFA
Thomas Merrill Warnick
Lone Peak FFA
Cade Lyle Willoughby
North Summit FFA
Seth D. Wilson
Payson FFA
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Dixie FFA

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Snyder FFA
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Hico FFA
Marcus Arnold
Panhandle FFA
Roel Ayala
Cotulla FFA
Hailey Baker
Anahuac FFA
Brittney Baldrige
Channelview FFA
Neely Balko
Calallen FFA
Lenzi Barthold
Era FFA
Brenna Baumann
Grandview FFA
Frannie Berend
Pilot Point FFA
Lauren Birdsong
Aubrey FFA
Brett Boatwright
Cotulla FFA
Leslie Bourg
Cleburne FFA
Calli Boyer
Anahuac FFA

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Kelby Bridwell
Calallen FFA
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Howe FFA
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Burlison FFA
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Avery Gonzales
Groesbeck FFA
Cody Green
Bridgeport FFA
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Reese Hagan
Yoakum FFA

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New Diana FFA
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James Madison FFA
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Aaron Henderson
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Weimar FFA
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Cheryl Hudec
Weimar FFA
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Round Top-Carmine FFA
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Gilmer FFA
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Clear Creek FFA
Cason Jordan
Bridgeport FFA
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Bowie-Austin FFA
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Somerset FFA
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Tilden FFA
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New Diana FFA
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Bowie FFA
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Covington FFA
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Chester FFA
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Ryan FFA

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Nacogdoches FFA
Rachel Pennington
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Calallen FFA
Ryan Perriraz
Calallen FFA
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Weimar FFA
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Normangee FFA
Kalya Sanders
Aubrey FFA
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Sterling FFA
Rusty Smith
Snyder FFA
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Canyon-New Braunfels
FFA
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Tilden FFA
Trevor Thompson
Pilot Point FFA
Tyler Thompson
Snyder FFA
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Lone Oak FFA
Chelsea Tomascik
Cameron Yoe FFA
Hannah Turner
New Diana FFA
Judson Ulrich
Weimar FFA
Martha Vellenga
Como-Pickton FFA
Evan Venn
Gilmer FFA

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Prosper FFA
Josh Watson
Winnsboro FFA
Logan West
Snyder FFA
Mazie C. West
Cotulla FFA
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Waskom FFA
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Troy FFA
Kristen Wiehe
Florence FFA
Parish Williams
New Diana FFA
Weston Wolff
Taft FFA
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Calallen FFA
Kristy Young
Northwest FFA

Tennessee

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Woodbury FFA
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Dyersburg FFA
Clint Bacon
Jefferson County FFA
Kimberly Ball
Cherokee FFA
Megan LaShea Bible
Cocke County FFA
Justin Boswell
Lebanon FFA
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South Side FFA
Brandi Bowen
Wilson Central FFA
Jacob Bowen
DeKalb County FFA
Christopher Bringham
Lebanon FFA
Jaska Brown
Portland FFA
Justin Timothy Campbell
Horace Maynard FFA
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East Robertson FFA
Josh Carr
East Robertson FFA
Loren Carroll
Crocket County FFA
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Munford FFA
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Covington FFA
Chelsea Anne Cooper
Daniel Boone FFA
Justin Davis
Lebanon FFA

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Moore County FFA
Joseph Trent Dowdy
South Fulton FFA
Richard Dunavant
South Side FFA
Jordan Lynn Elkins
Warren County FFA
Haley Paige Eskew
Crocket County FFA
Bonnie Beth Fakes
Lebanon FFA
Joshua Allen Freeman
Portland FFA
William Adam Galbreath
Beech FFA
Chadd Gilliam
Lexington FFA
Robert Benjamin Gordon
South Side FFA
Dana Gray
Moore County FFA



Mack Gregg
Bradley Central FFA
Joshua P. Gregory
Smyrna FFA
Jonathan Matthew Groce
Moore County FFA
Jennifer Leigh Hall
Johnson County FFA
Rachel Jayne Hammond
Halls FFA
Beth Harvey
Munford FFA
Justin Hazlewood
South Fulton FFA
Casey James Hendrix
David Crockett FFA
Nathan Hensley
Chuckey-Doak FFA
Andy Higgins
Woodbury FFA
Clint Hodges
Jefferson County FFA
Joseph Hodges
Portland FFA
Sandra Holmes
Westmoreland FFA

Sarah Leigh Holt
Obion County Central FFA
Justin Lee Humphrey
Dyer County FFA
Matthew Michael
Humphrey
Dyer County FFA
Amanda Jaye Hunt
Halls FFA
Jessica Jarrell
West Greene FFA
James Jeffers
Chuckey-Doak FFA
Matthew Blake Jones
McNairy Central FFA
Blake Steven Kee
Liberty FFA
Lacey Kelley
Lebanon FFA
Benjamin Jon Kelly
Wilson Central FFA
Justin Adam King

Warren County FFA
Jonathon Knipper
South Side FFA
Jenna Batson Lackey
East Robertson FFA
Amber Lain
Wilson Central FFA
Brandon Nathaniel Lamb
Eagleville FFA
Dustin Robert Lamb
Eagleville FFA
Lori Beth Lance
Woodbury FFA
Abigail Lemley
East Robertson FFA
Karen Leann Little
Clarkrange FFA
Lindsay Maye Love
Chuckey-Doak FFA
Josh Martin
South Side FFA
Bobby McAllister
Woodbury FFA
Matthew H. McBride
Liberty FFA
Adam McCall
Dyer County FFA

Rebecca Carol McEwen
Obion County Central FFA
Heather McLean
Dyer County FFA
Samuel Moore
Jefferson County FFA
Joni Mullinix
Wilson Central FFA
Hunter Daniel Newman
Liberty FFA
Cody Isaac Osborne
Johnson County FFA
Eric Lee Overton
Cumberland Gap FFA
Timothy Parks
Moore County FFA
Bradley Pearman
Cumberland Gap FFA
Nick Peterson
Lexington FFA
Billy Jan Porter
Johnson County FFA
Ashley Powell
Woodbury FFA
Cody Powell
Wilson Central FFA
Daniel J. Powell
Paris FFA
Brant Lee Prater
Warren County FFA
Katie Lynne Privett
Halls FFA
Kyle Riddle
Moore County FFA
James Roberson
Dyer County FFA
Dustin Rottero
Wilson Central FFA
Dusty Martin Saylor
Daniel Boone FFA
Bradley T. Seaton
South Greene FFA
Tyler Wayne Seaton
Dyersburg FFA
Matthew Sellars
Jefferson County FFA
Katherin Dee Shapcott
Eagleville FFA
Jeremy Shartzter
Portland FFA
Shellie Shartzter
Portland FFA
Nicci Shipley
South Greene FFA
Mike Simmons
Chuckey-Doak FFA
Ashton Ann Smith
Cumberland County FFA
Lacy Leigh Smith
Warren County FFA
Tyler Smith
Paris FFA
Randy Dale Stanfield
McNairy Central FFA
Hunter Ray Stephens
Obion County Central FFA
Jason Stoll
Woodbury FFA
Franklin Timothy Storey
South Fulton FFA

Robert Daniel Taylor
Liberty FFA
Kara Elizabeth Tipton
Lincoln County FFA
Jared Tomlin
Wilson Central FFA
Britta Ann Trail
Woodbury FFA
Hannah Rae Turner
Crocket County FFA
James Matthew Vaughn
Eagleville FFA
Matthew Walling
Springfield FFA
Nicholas James Warren
South Side FFA
Jeffrey Whitehead
Woodbury FFA
Jake Whitman
Liberty FFA
Kelly Whitson
Obion County Central FFA
Benjamin Wiggins
Crocket County FFA
Casey Elizabeth Williams
Crocket County FFA
Matthew S. Wix
Westmoreland FFA
Jay Wright
East Robertson FFA
Brian Allen Wyatt
Bledsoe FFA

South Dakota

Michael Wayne Ackerman
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Jason Biel
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Beresford FFA
David Carroll
De Smet FFA
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Florence FFA
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Bridget Fousek
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McCook Central FFA
John Harvey
McCook Central FFA
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McCook Central FFA
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Flandreau FFA
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Marion FFA
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Viborg FFA
Brian R. Larson
De Smet FFA

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Rapid City FFA
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Florence FFA
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McCook Central FFA
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Sisseton FFA
Michelle Osterman
Groton FFA
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McCook Central FFA
Matthew Petersen
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Stacy Redder
Flandreau FFA
Wayne M. Robison
Rapid City FFA
Kerry Roling
McCook Central FFA
Betsy Steckel
Sanborn Central FFA
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Harrisburg FFA
Rustin Vandersnick
Garretson FFA
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Sioux Valley FFA
Jennifer Lynn Wubben
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Webster FFA

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Calhoun Falls FFA
Michael Wesley Burdette
Calhoun Falls FFA
Jonathan Daniel Dorn
Calhoun Falls FFA
Rachel Jarrard
Crescent FFA
Joshua T. O'Rear
Aiken FFA
Jacob Powers
Lexington Technology
Center FFA
Rebekah Ann Roof
Lexington Technology
Center FFA
Christie Simpson
Crescent FFA
Emily Waggoner
Pendleton FFA

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Exeter-West Greenwich
FFA

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FFA
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S. U. Manuel Mendia
Moret FFA
Idalys Reyes-Hernandez
S. U. Manuel Mendia
Moret FFA

Pennsylvania

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Linesville FFA
Joshua R. Bailey
Red Lion FFA
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Red Lion FFA
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Dover FFA
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Cloister FFA
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Dover FFA
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Cloister FFA
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Manheim FFA

Oregon

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Willamina FFA
Matthew Baker
Bonanza FFA
Sarah Elizabeth Ballini
Molalla FFA
Jenny Bartell
Imbler FFA
Jason Beck
Imbler FFA
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Willamina FFA
Kyle Hook
Joseph FFA
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Kirian Kossler
Pine-Eagle FFA
Andrew Lierman
Silverton Union FFA
Beth McClaran
Joseph FFA
Ashley McDaniel
Willamina FFA
Mike Merkle
Bonanza FFA
Megan Muilenburg
Imbler FFA
Kasidy Nielsen
Molalla FFA
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Enterprise FFA
Amanda Owen
Oregon State University
Collegiate FFA
Kara Ruth Palacio
Bend FFA
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Sherwood FFA
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Newberg FFA
Carly Inga Sether
Molalla FFA
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Union FFA
Amber Ten Eyck
Sandy FFA
Ruth Walton
Central FFA
Amanda Ware
Hermiston FFA
Owen White
Crater FFA



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Manor FFA
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Northern Lebanon FFA

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Kyle Supplee
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Willamina FFA
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Balko FFA
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Burlington FFA
Brett Bain
Lawton FFA
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Stilwell FFA
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Roland FFA
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Bixby FFA
Dusty Behne
Stratford FFA
Christopher Belford
Crescent FFA
Hailey Blagg
Talihina FFA

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Balko FFA

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Wister FFA

Dillon Butchee
Navajo FFA

Tyler Castonguay
Omega FFA

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Adair FFA

Brooke Clay
Perkins-Tryon FFA

William Thomas Cosner
Roland FFA

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Grove FFA

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Durant FFA

Samantha Davidson
Verden FFA

Benjamin Kyle Davis
Guthrie FFA

Jessica Dawson
Eufaula FFA

Jon Jay Devore
Laverne FFA

Scotty Dori
Newkirk FFA

Terence Doty
Purcell FFA

Brandon Duffy
Omega FFA

Brooke Edsall
Omega FFA

Justin Edsall
Omega FFA

Cooper Alan Eggleston
Texhoma FFA

Ryan England
Panola FFA

Vickie Lea Enis
Wilburton FFA

Keenan Ervin
Achille FFA

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Lexington FFA

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Kara Elizabeth Graham
Burlington FFA

Tyler Gray
Latta FFA

Hannah Gregory
Tuttle FFA

Jared Cole Grissom
Strother FFA

Jenna Hope Grubbs
Geronimo FFA

RaeAnn Elizabeth Hagar
Chouteau FFA

Kristin Reta Harper
Freedom FFA

Riley Harrison
Hooker FFA

Todd Hayes
Fletcher FFA

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Garber FFA

Christopher Dale Hilton
Pryor FFA

Emily Hogland
Tuttle FFA

Stanley Austin Horn
Yukon FFA

Lauren Hubbard
Cushing FFA

Dustin Wayne Jarvis
Afton FFA

Bobbie Joi Jenkins
Liberty FFA

Hollye Denise Jernigen
Indianola FFA

Brianna Jett
Laverne FFA

Jarrod Johnson
Garber FFA

Cole Andrew Johnston
Vinita FFA

Casey Paul Jones
Bennington FFA

Dustin Karber
Balko FFA

Annamarie Kathryn Kelly
Frontier FFA

Cody Paul Kennedy
Whitesboro FFA

Justin Kennedy
Whitesboro FFA

Sammi Dawn Kildow
Cherokee FFA

Emily Joyce Kilian
Medford FFA

Asa Quintin Kinder
Chattanooga FFA

Kadie Koopp
Jenks FFA

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Morris FFA

Ross Kubik
Newkirk FFA

Jenna Kuhlman
Calvin FFA

Rachael Elizabeth Langley
Adair FFA

Tabitha Latta
Fort Supply FFA

Brian Levings
Perry FFA

Brandon Scott Loeser
Burlington FFA

Justin Odell Long
Vinita FFA

Brendon Lowe
Chickasha FFA

Cortney Nicole Loyd
Poteau FFA

William Hunter Magness
Okemah FFA

Warren Malson
Reydon FFA

Gena Manhart
Butler FFA

Lee Martin
Pawnee FFA

Chris Matlock
Durant FFA

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Cushing FFA

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David Moss
Bluejacket FFA

Tyler Nabors
Garber FFA

Charlie Robert O'Donnell
Carney FFA

Chrissy Oldham
Bethel FFA

Kryslyn Renea Packard
Burlington FFA

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Chattanooga FFA

Dayla Randi Peel
Wetumka FFA

Darin Pemberton
Billings FFA

Clinton Orin Peverley
Oologah FFA

Jennifer Lee Peverley
Oologah FFA

Katy Leann Pfenning
Mountain View-Gotebo
FFA

Kelli Piguet
Vinita FFA

Aspen Marie Pirtle
Copan FFA

Tiffani Pruitt
Chickasha FFA

Jeremy Raby
Wilson FFA

Jason Ray
Wanette FFA

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Jeremy Todd Roberson
Pryor FFA

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Atoka FFA

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Whitesboro FFA

Brent Sadler
Perkins-Tryon FFA

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Shattuck FFA

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Byng FFA

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Garber FFA

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Lawton FFA

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Talawanda-Butler Tech
FFA

Kyle Blakley
Talawanda-Butler Tech
FFA

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 Johnstown-Monroe FFA
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 Marlinton FFA
Harold Patrick Karnes
 McClain FFA
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 Elmwood FFA
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 Archbold FFA
Philip Klopfenstein
 Wayne Trace FFA
Jake Knapke
 Fort Recovery FFA
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 New Bremen FFA
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 Hillsdale FFA
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 Anthony Wayne FFA
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 Liberty Union FFA
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 Miami Trace FFA
Ryan McChesney
 Mt. Gilead FFA
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 Buckeye Trail FFA
Michael McCoy
 Utica FFA
Jennifer McNamee
 North Union FFA
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 Albany FFA
Alisha Miller
 Liberty Union FFA
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 Benjamin Logan FFA
David Miller
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 Wynford FFA
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 South Central FFA
Sheldon L. Miller
 Oak Harbor/Penta FFA
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 Federal Hocking FFA
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 Ayersville FFA
Daniel A. Myers
 Greenville FFA
Tana Myers
 Mapleton FFA
Marvin E. Neer
 Indian Lake FFA
Abby Nelsh
 Mechanicsburg FFA
Mark Nessler
 Arlington FFA
Nicholaus David Nessley
 Lancaster FFA
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 Edgerton FFA
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 Waterford FFA
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 Chief Logan FFA
Joseph Olinger
 Ridgewood FFA
Calen Osborne
 Talawanda-Butler Tech FFA
Debra Osborne
 Wilmington FFA
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 Carrollton FFA
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Pitsenbarger
 Versailles FFA
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 Otsego FFA
Chad Poeppelman
 Fort Loramie FFA
Laura Rose Pohlman
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Luke Redmond
 Fairbanks FFA

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West Holmes FFA

Chad Reynolds
Elmwood FFA

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Minster FFA

Andrew Riffle
Ansonia FFA

Fred Risch
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Upper Scioto Valley FFA

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Monroeville FFA

Esther Rupp
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Travis Russell
Fort Loramie FFA

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Chris Schilling
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Adam R. Schlegel
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Cindy Schriener
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Fairfield FFA

Wendy Sewell
Albany FFA

Devin Shaffer
Mt. Gilead FFA

Benjamin Shawler
Miami East FFA

Brian J. Sheets
Chief Logan FFA

Joseph Shively
Miami East FFA

Christina Shoemaker
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Taysha Short
Millcreek-West Unity FFA

Joshua Skolmutch
West Holmes FFA

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National Trail FFA

Amanda Smith
Arlington FFA

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Cardington FFA

Andrew J. Snyder
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Brad Spangler
Leipsic FFA

Alexa Spencer
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Union Local FFA

Ryan Stachler
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Edon FFA

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Leipsic FFA

Matthew A. Steinmetz
Bellevue FFA

Andrew Stickel
Eastwood FFA

Laken Kay Stocker
Indian Valley FFA

Nick Stuckman
Colonel Crawford FFA

Hannah Sundberg
Pymatuning Valley FFA

Seth Taylor
Mechanicsburg FFA

Matt Thomas
Fairfield Union FFA

Michelle Thompson
Benjamin Logan FFA



Dean F. Throckmorton III
Fairfield Union FFA

Kyle Titus
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Shelly Toops
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Aaron Tournoux
Marlington FFA

Todd Trentman
Delphos FFA

Kerri Turner
Kenton FFA

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Coldwater FFA

John Vance
Miami Valley Career Tech Center FFA

Cierra Lynn Walker
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Mark Walter
Colonel Crawford FFA

Clint Warner
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Julie Watson
Buckeye Trail FFA

Kodie Weaver
Upper Sandusky FFA

Justin D. Welter
Crestview FFA

Abigail Wensink
Bowling Green FFA

Jennifer Westrick
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Hillsdale FFA

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Miami East FFA

Grant Wilson
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Sean Wonder
Old Fort FFA

Adam T. Wood
Benjamin Logan FFA

Jeff D. Wood
Edison FFA

Brad Wuebker
St. Henry FFA

Russell Lester Wulber
Versailles FFA

Jessica Ziegler
Bellevue FFA

North Dakota

Zachary L. Axtman
Rugby FFA

Michael Bechtle
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Karissa E. Brobst
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Rugby FFA

Chase Carson
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Lisbon FFA

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Wahpeton FFA

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Napoleon FFA

Andrew Jordan Dosch
Powers Lake FFA

Christopher J. Duchsherer
Minot FFA

Jayne Lynn Fiesel
Harvey FFA

Alan Fosness
Rugby FFA

Alexis Freier
Medina FFA

Adam Goldade
Rugby FFA

Billy Haberman
Wyndmere FFA

Whitney Haux
Kindred FFA

Eric J. Heger
Wahpeton FFA

Jared Higgins
Carrington FFA

Neil Anthony Horner
Napoleon FFA

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Matthew Johnson
Turtle Lake/Mercer FFA

Cole Julson
Wahpeton FFA

Christopher Kappes
Gackle/Streeter FFA

Jordan Kimball
Divide County FFA

Timothy J. Kopp
Des Lacs/Burlington FFA

Jaclyn Lommel
Wahpeton FFA

Cody Lunde
Maddock A.S. Gibbens FFA

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Wyndmere FFA

Justin Meier
Rugby FFA

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Washburn FFA

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Rugby FFA

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Wishek FFA

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Harvey FFA

Heather Marie Wells
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Randleman FFA

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Tanisha Glover
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Orange FFA

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Orange FFA

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North Lenoir FFA

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North Iredell FFA
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North Davidson FFA
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Schoharie Valley FFA
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Pioneer FFA
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Pioneer FFA

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Texico FFA
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Sierra Nevada FFA
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Wisner-Pilger FFA

Jennifer Horst
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Hartington FFA
William Maurice Koch
Hartington FFA
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North Bend FFA
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Blue Hill FFA
Kayla Kumm
Bloomfield FFA
Christopher A. Lammers
Hartington FFA
Kayla M. Lammers
Hartington FFA
Andy Langemeier
Logan View FFA
Scott Langemeier
Logan View FFA
Alisha Large
Chase County FFA
Scott E. Leibbrandt
Chase County FFA
Ryan Look
Spencer-Naper FFA
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Ravenna FFA
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Ord FFA
Tammi Marsh
Hartington FFA

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Derek M. Meyers
Southwest FFA
Matt Miller
Milford FFA
Patrick Morgan
Loup County FFA
Roger Morgan
Loup County FFA
Zachary Morton
Waverly FFA
Paige E. Moser
Palmyra FFA
Mysti La'Rae Mues
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Aimee Naber
Centennial FFA
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Ord FFA
Mikaela Newton
Hartington FFA
Tyler Newton
Heartland FFA
Courtney L. Nichols
Wheeler Central FFA
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Freeman FFA
Adam Nolan
Spencer-Naper FFA
Andrew Scott Nordhues
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Sutton FFA
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Sutton FFA
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Megan Post
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Boone Central FFA
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Logan View FFA
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Howells FFA
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Flathead FFA
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Shields Valley FFA
Andrew Fowler
Conrad FFA
Erin Gernaat
Conrad FFA
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Mission Valley FFA
Sara Hamler
Ruby Valley FFA
Christine Daphne Hansen
Big Timber FFA
Brandie Rae Hendrickson
Plentywood FFA
Sam Herreid
Mission Valley FFA
Merlynn Hirsch
Miles City FFA
Lyle Huckins
Broadus FFA
Jill Nadine Kanning
Plentywood FFA
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Miles City FFA
Molly Judith Klaboe
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Levi Muhs
Joliet FFA
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Rock Port FFA
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Stet FFA
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Halfway FFA
Leah Francka
Pleasant Hope FFA
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Tipton FFA
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Kelbie Fries
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Maysville FFA
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Bowling Green FFA
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Linn FFA
Melissa Kleiboeker
Pierce City FFA
Brandon Kliethermes
Tipton FFA
Jason Koch
Hermann FFA
Jeff Koerkenmeier
Tipton FFA
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Meadville FFA
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Tipton FFA
Benjamin Ledford
Bowling Green FFA
Matthew Lehar
East Newton FFA
Miranda Leppin
Milan FFA
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Craig FFA
Justin Lueck
Santa Fe FFA
Matthew David Luke
Stanberry FFA
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Schuyler R-I FFA
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Macks Creek FFA
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Odessa FFA
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Jennifer Denee Neal
Cass Career Center FFA
Willie Neher
Jasper FFA
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Bowling Green FFA
Ryan Niemeyer
Bowling Green FFA
Adam Ray Norton
Memphis FFA
Cody J. Norvell
Pleasant Hill FFA
Erica Nowlin
Carl Junction FFA
Michael Ockerhausen
Warrenton FFA
Ryan Orbals
Russellville FFA
Jennifer Ottomeier
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Nathan Owens
Slater FFA
Andrew G. Palmer
Smithville FFA
Kelsie Parker
Gallatin FFA
Mary Jo Parrott
East Newton FFA
Mary Pendergrass
Bakersfield FFA
Meagan Perry
Bowling Green FFA
Joshua Kyle Petty
Smithville FFA

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Gainesville FFA
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South Holt FFA
Christopher Pritchett
Wellsville-Middletown FFA
Kate Probert
Mansfield FFA
Eric James Probst
Memphis FFA
Josh Pyle
Mansfield FFA
Jason Quick
Chillicothe FFA
Alesa Ann Raasch
Norborne FFA
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Lebanon FFA
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Willard FFA
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Rich Hill FFA
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Lamar FFA
Lindsay Reed
Lathrop FFA
Michelle Reeves
Richmond FFA
Jamie Reichert
Brunswick FFA
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Chillicothe FFA
Todd Reinert
Versailles FFA
Amanda L. Reinhart
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North Harrison FFA
Megan Lynn Richardson
Albany FFA
Jordan Richner
Pleasant Hope FFA
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Bowling Green FFA
Tyler Robertson
Licking FFA
Matthew James Roderick
Fulton FFA
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Hermann FFA
Zackary Ruesler
Jackson FFA
Jason Rugg
Adrian FFA
John Runde
Gallatin FFA
Danny Ryan
Troy FFA
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Pleasant Hope FFA
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Tipton FFA
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Houston FFA

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Skyline FFA
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Trenton FFA
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Van-Far FFA
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Osceola FFA
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Schuyler RI FFA
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Willow Springs FFA
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Troy FFA
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Aurora FFA
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Pleasant Hill FFA
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Walnut Grove FFA
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Brooklyn FFA
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Brooklyn FFA
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Neshoba Central FFA
Ryan Shane Shattles
Brooklyn FFA
Courtney Townsend
Forest-Scott FFA
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Neshoba Central FFA
Casey Williams
Seminary FFA
Blake Williamson
Sumrall FFA



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Ashland FFA
Jessica Van Leer
Union FFA
Jesse VanBooven
Hermann FFA
Erin Vest
Boonville FFA
Jaime Vickrey
Sweet Springs FFA
Sara Wagner
Willow Springs FFA
Joshua Dale Waters
Stet FFA

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Palmyra FFA
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South Shelby FFA
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Sumrall FFA

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Waldron FFA
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Jessica K. Rabe
Montague FFA
David Reed
Centreville FFA
Cayle Dean Reha Jr.
Ovid-Elsie FFA
David Reibling
Laker FFA
Chad Riley
Corunna FFA
Kayla Roosa
Breckenridge FFA
Amanda Smolek
Corunna FFA
Kaylie Steere
St. Louis FFA
Ashley Lynn Stickler
Chippewa Hills FFA

Kaela Thom
Breckenridge FFA
April J. Vogl
Laingsburg FFA
Bruce K. Wenzlick
New Lothrop FFA
Jordan Lee Wernette
Chippewa Hills FFA
Erin Wheaton
Charlotte FFA
Stasha Jo Wheaton
Bronson FFA
Benjamin Wisner
Caledonia FFA
Mark V. Wyrick
Byron FFA
Kirk Yackle
Laker FFA
Kylee Zdunic
Corunna FFA

Massachusetts

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Peter A. Malione
Essex FFA

Maryland

Katie Albaugh
Walkersville FFA
Lacie M. Berkebile
North Garrett FFA
Jason Lee Green
Catoctin FFA
Lindsay Frances Shirk
Clear Spring FFA
John Trego Zimmerman III
Walkersville FFA

Maine

Jordan Carmichael
Presque Isle FFA
Darick C. Williams
Caribou FFA

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Danielle Elise Beard
North Central FFA
Kyle Blank
East Ascension FFA
Blake A. Brignac
St. Amant FFA
Christopher L. Burkes
Mt. Hermon FFA
Aaron Catalanatto
Ponchatoula FFA
Rebekka Green
Bogalusa FFA
Kindell Keating
Bogalusa FFA
Ryan Mayers
Hammond FFA
Ashley Crawford Nobles
Bogalusa FFA
Crystal Nolan
Bogalusa FFA
Ashley Michelle Passman
Pine FFA
Kelli Phillips
Bogalusa FFA

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Meghan Simoneaux
Rayne FFA

Cory J. Smith
Beau Chene FFA

Andrew Tyler Thomas
Bogalusa FFA

Jody Williams
Bogalusa FFA

Kentucky

Whitney Adams
Apollo FFA

Corey Adler
Logan County FFA

William Allen
Wayne County FFA

Jina Amis
Owsley County FFA

Matthew Anderson
Lincoln County FFA

John David Artis
Heath FFA

Justin Austin
Muhlenberg North FFA

Jared Ayres
Garrard County FFA

Nancy Claire Baker
Caldwell County FFA

Daniel Ballard
Madison Southern FFA

Hope Christine Ballman
Grayson County FFA

Travis Lee Baney
Larue County FFA

Hannah Lea Berry
John Hardin FFA

Adrienne Nicole Black
Fulton County FFA

Charles Bodell
Ballard Memorial FFA

Mark Allen Boone
Apollo FFA

Christopher Aaron Boyd
Boyd County FFA

Sarah Boyd
Larue County FFA

Alex Bramer
Spencer County FFA

Christa Suzanne Brooks
Logan County FFA

Mike Brookshire
Clark County FFA

Kasey Jo Brown
Breckinridge County FFA

Tricia Brown
Apollo FFA

Whitney Leigh Brown
Breckinridge County FFA

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Western Hills FFA

Lance Bryant
Todd Central FFA

Terra Bryant
Barren County FFA

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Sarah Burton
Central Hardin FFA

Daniel Craig Bustle
Rockcastle County FFA

William Coleman
Camenisch
Lincoln County FFA

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Bourbon County FFA

Nathan Cecil
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Bourbon County FFA

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Crittenden County FFA

Matt Collins
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Tyler Colvin
Nelson County FFA

Jonathan Brown Conder
Boyle County FFA

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Johnson Central FFA

Lauren Cottingham
Webster County FFA

Amber DeAnn Creek
Logan County FFA

Calvin DeWayne
Curtsinger
Carlisle County FFA

Jennie Danks
Logan County FFA

Justin O'Neal Davenport
Central Hardin FFA

Jennifer Davis
Southwestern Pulaski
FFA

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Matthew Dickinson
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Cobie Evans
Livingston Central FFA

Samuel Evans
Taylor County FFA

Tim Foley
Bourbon County FFA

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Breathitt County FFA

Tyler Marion Gilreath
McCreary Central FFA

Aaron Glass
Metcalf County FFA

Nathan Goff
Wolfe County FFA

Jessica Amberg Goodman
Fulton County FFA

Justin Gossett
Hopkins Central FFA

William Reed Graham
Wolfe County FFA

Sara Jo Greene
Pendleton County FFA

Brett Gregory
Breckinridge County FFA

Virginia Rose Gregory
Central Hardin FFA

April Michelle Grey
Central Hardin FFA

Morgan Grose
Jessamine County FFA

Whitney Grubb
East Carter FFA

Lucas Gumm
Owsley County FFA

Jessica Brooke Gusler
Larue County FFA

Jonathan Miles Hargrove
Graves County FFA

Austin Harris
Hopkins Central FFA

Daniel S. Hendrickson
Union County FFA

Heather Himes
Garrard County FFA

Cassandra Lynne Huckeba
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Curt Isaacs
Garrard County FFA

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Caleb M. Jenkin
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Mary Jennings
Lee County FFA

Jordan K. Jewell
Barren County FFA

Adam C. Johnson
Oldham County FFA

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Fulton County FFA

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Marion County FFA

Daniel Jordan
Spencer County FFA

Jordan Lynne Judy
Todd Central FFA

Augustine J. Koch
Bourbon County FFA

Krista Kouns
East Carter FFA

William Lane III
Boyle County FFA

John Laster
Todd Central FFA

Amber Lee
Apollo FFA

Travis Leech
Graves County FFA

Joseph Lester
McCreary Central FFA

Mitchell Lewis
John Hardin FFA

Brittany Kay Linkous
Breathitt County FFA

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Bourbon County FFA

Sean Lyttle
John Hardin FFA

Christina Lyvers
Marion County FFA

Andrew R. Mains
Pendleton County FFA

Jaclyn Machele Mantlo
Logan County FFA

Chelsea Marksberry
Daviss County FFA

Sarah C. Marshall
Fleming County FFA

Jamie Kay Mason
Bourbon County FFA

Kayla McFarland
Bourbon County FFA

Jana Marie McMurtry
Garrard County FFA

Perry Meador
Franklin-Simpson FFA

Dale Wayne Medley
Washington County FFA

Matthew Wallace Medley
Washington County FFA

Amber Louann Miller
Central Hardin FFA

Steven Corey Milton
Clark County FFA

Matthew Monroe
Barren County FFA

Donnie Montgomery
Owsley County FFA

Julie A. Montgomery
Webster County FFA

Karen Leigh Morgan
Western Hills FFA

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Johnson Central FFA

Aaron Myers
Deming FFA

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Heath FFA

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J. David O'Bryan
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Holli Tiffin Parke
Bourbon County FFA

Megan Sue Parker
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Jessi Patton
East Carter FFA

Casey Payne
Apollo FFA

Darren Ross Payne
Larue County FFA

Ryan M. Peek
Caldwell County FFA

Sheldon Anne Pence
Fleming County FFA

Vanessa Peyton
Wolfe County FFA

Derrick Pike
Meade County FFA

Billy Powell
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Whitley County FFA

Todd A. Reynolds
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Bourbon County FFA

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Roseberry
Clark County FFA

Christen Roy
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Bridget Schadler
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Webster County FFA

Jordan Seaton
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Wolfe County FFA

Tara Simpson
Garrard County FFA

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Larue County FFA

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Taylor County FFA

Kathy Jo Smith
Madison Southern FFA

Kyle Smith
Taylor County FFA

Rebecca Ann Smith
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John Milton Sosbe
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Jonathan Spencer
Wolfe County FFA

Thomas Stevens
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James Randal Stewart
Fulton County FFA

Miranda Stinson
Franklin-Simpson FFA

Matt Suiter
Todd Central FFA

Tyler Hayden Terry
Breathitt County FFA

Adam Thomas
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Daviss County FFA

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Owsley County FFA

Mark Thomas
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John Hardin FFA

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Hickman County FFA

Whitney Allington Turner
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Harrison County FFA

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Taylor County FFA
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Clay Center FFA
Lynae Beam
Hillcrest FFA
Britni Cheyenne Beck
Onaga FFA
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Wellington FFA
Chase Bontrager
Holton FFA
Austin Lee Bosse
Onaga FFA
Brook Bradbury
Fort Scott FFA
Nathan Bradbury
Wellington FFA
Sarah Bradbury
Wellington FFA
William Brown
Rock Creek FFA
Drew Crosse
Minneapolis FFA
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Winfield FFA
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LaPorte-Dysart FFA
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Mount Ayr FFA
Justin Bisinger
Midland FFA
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Megan Brown
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DeWitt Central FFA
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Charles City FFA
Brent Hanken
North Fayette FFA
Travis Hansen
Atlantic FFA
Clint Hartmann
Humboldt FFA
Kyle Hatfield
Central Trail FFA
Mitchel Hemesath
Decorah FFA
Ryan Hicks
Prairie Valley FFA
Steve Hoffman
Carroll Area FFA
James Ide
Creston FFA
Michael Ryan Inloes
Mount Ayr FFA
Mary J. Irlbeck
Coon Rapids-Bayard FFA
Kyle Irlmeier
CAM FFA
Mitchell Jensen
Glidden Ralston FFA
Melissa Johnson
Cascade FFA
Samuel Johnson
Creston FFA
William Jones
Sioux Central FFA
Troy Daniel Kane
Wapsie Valley FFA
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Laci Klinkel
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Hudson FFA
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Wapello FFA
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North Fayette FFA
Dan Martin
Cascade FFA
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Mid-Prairie FFA
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DeWitt Central FFA
Marty McLees
Cascade FFA
Mike McLees
Cascade FFA
Casey Duane Meggers
Interstate 35 FFA
Kelly Miller
CAM FFA
Matthew J. Miller
Cascade FFA

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Columbus FFA
Gabe Munson
Pilot Creek FFA
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Bison FFA
Justin R. L. Murray
Prairie Valley FFA
Nathan A. Nedved
Iowa River FFA
Jeremy Nehl
Oelwein FFA
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Rockford FFA
Clint Paulsen
CAM FFA
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Justin Dale Retallic
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Marengo FFA
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Edgewood-Colesburg FFA
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Rockwell City Lytton FFA
Kyle A. Shipley
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Charles City FFA
Cole Sievers
Walnut FFA
Erin Slouha
Midland FFA
Joseph Andrew Sperslage
North-Linn FFA
Levi John Sprung
Riceville FFA
Bradley Ronald Staner
Cascade FFA
Stephanie Staudt
Rockford FFA
Adam D. Theis
Riceville FFA
Jessie Thole
West Delaware FFA
Lonny Truelsen
DeWitt Central FFA
Marcie Vinsand
Humboldt FFA
Peter Vold
Forest City FFA
Joseph William Wilker
Tri Star FFA
Danielle Wilson
West Central FFA
Ryan Wirkler
Tri Star FFA
Kyle Yarolem
Midland FFA
Shane Yarolem
Cascade FFA
Ethan Zellmer
Atlantic FFA

Indiana

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Rushville FFA
Eric Joseph Bahler
Tri-County FFA
Diana Lynn Berning
Heritage FFA
Alexander J. Bertsch
Adams Central FFA
Adam David Bickel
Corydon Central FFA
Jonathan Brookbank
Liberty FFA
Andrea Sue Christlieb
East Noble FFA
Bruce Cooley
Eastern Hancock FFA
Heather Nicole Crabtree
Western Boone FFA
Joseph Patrick Dixon
South Decatur FFA
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Tri-County FFA
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Boonville FFA
Joe Dynes
South Adams FFA
Amanda Ellsworth
Heritage Hills FFA
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Corydon Central FFA
Jeremy Fish
Eastbrook FFA
Kenneth Allen Fisher Jr.
Corydon Central FFA
Brad Fox
Adams Central FFA
Matthew C. Fry
North Putnam FFA
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Tri-County FFA
Amanda Lea Gable
Manchester FFA
Shawn Gearhart
Warsaw FFA
Jordan M. Gentry
Tri-County FFA
Michelle Gohn
Rochester FFA
Wesley J. Gutsell
Forest Park FFA
Danny Haberlin
Western Boone FFA
Natalie Rachae Harmeyer
Rushville FFA
Michael Harmon
Corydon Central FFA
Jessie Heller
Bellmont FFA
Robert Hoel
Rushville FFA
Angela Hoffman
Columbia City FFA
Jenae Elizabeth Horn
Jay County FFA
Daniel Aaron Johnston
Clinton Central FFA
Anthony J. Keil
Gibson Southern FFA
Kristi C. Kirtley
Hagerstown FFA
Kyle Kurtz
Tri-County FFA

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Adam Lehman
Adams Central FFA

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Prairie Heights FFA

Andrew Long
Manchester FFA

Chad Lueken
Forest Park FFA

Robert E. McClatchey
North Newton FFA

Ryan Mehling
Forest Park FFA

Titus Asher Michael
Carroll @ Flora FFA

John Arnold Michel
Boonville FFA

Brandon Miller
Rossville FFA

Dustin Miller
Manchester FFA

Bradley Morehouse
Fairfield FFA

Joni Lynn Naylor
Rushville FFA

Patrick Owen Pha Neal
Hagerstown FFA

James Newbauer
Rossville FFA

Jonathan Nolting
Columbus FFA

Robert J. Ordner
Corydon Central FFA

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Southmont FFA

Amanda Joann Penrod
Manchester FFA

Rebekah J. Phillips
Heritage Hills FFA

Jennifer Pierce
Tri-County FFA

Levi David Pullen
Lewis Cass FFA

Jessica Ann Quear
Hamilton Heights FFA

Christoph S. Rieker
Columbus FFA

Luke Rivir
East Noble FFA

Melinda Faith Salmons
Whitko FFA

Amy Marie Sargent
Tri-County FFA

Craig Michael Schluttenhofer
Western Boone FFA

Andrew Seibert
North Posey FFA

Aimee Michelle Shaffer
Monroe Central FFA

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South Putnam FFA

Stephen E. Shepherd
Tri-County FFA

Brad Showalter
Fairfield FFA

Neil Skiles
Rossville FFA

Sawyer Sparks
Bloomfield FFA

Jennifer Ann Springer
DeKalb FFA

Dawn Suzanne Sutton
Tri-County FFA

Benjamin Thompson
Seymour FFA

Jacob Tobias
Southwestern Shelby FFA

Jim Vogel
Manchester FFA

Holly Walters
Manchester FFA

Andrew Werling
Bellmont FFA

Quinn Wicker
Rushville FFA

Illinois

Alicia Ackerman
Durand-Pecatonica-Winnebago FFA

Elizabeth Alloway
Jacksonville FFA

Jessica Aileen Anderson
Bluffs FFA

Charlotte Barrett
Paris FFA

Kacy Baugher
Windsor FFA

Ryan E. Baylor
Ashton FFA

Gretchen Boggess
Eldorado FFA

Jason Eugene Bollivar
R.O.W.V.A. FFA

Andrew Donald Bowman
R.O.W.V.A. FFA

Sara Jane Bretzman
Woodland FFA

Lee Brokaw
West Central FFA

Jessica Lyn Brown
Morrisonville FFA

Tyler John Burke
Amboy FFA

Jason Buss
Southeastern FFA

Kate Cardinali
Sycamore FFA

Scott E. Cheney
Southeastern FFA

Dustin Cole
Windsor FFA

Adam Dahmer
Marion FFA

Megan Dedert
Payson FFA

Andrew J. DeSutter
Alwood FFA

Sarah Deanette England
R.O.W.V.A. FFA

Barbara Ann Erickson
R.O.W.V.A. FFA

Jeremy Flikkema
Eastland FFA

Jeffrey Grabow
Crescent-Iroquois FFA

Nathan Griffel
Gillespie FFA

Ashley Hanold
Southwestern FFA

Jay Hild
Mount Pulaski FFA

Bradley J. Horn
Alwood FFA

Dane Hunter
Salem FFA

Katie Joan Jenness
Hinckley-Big Rock FFA

Michael F. Kaeb
Cissna Park FFA

Seth Maze
Goreville FFA

Kory E. McGovern
Beardstown FFA

Keith Mellert
Canton FFA

Matthew Thomas Meyer
Somonauk-Leland FFA

Janson Nesbo
Bluffs FFA

Ann M. Ochs
Olney FFA

Andrew Pennington
Cisne FFA

Cheryl Rahe
Jacksonville FFA



Dane Kief
Paxton-Buckley-Loda FFA

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Liberty FFA

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West Richland FFA

Blaine Langrehr
Sycamore FFA

Lucas Lehde
Nashville FFA

Jeffrey Lijja
Amboy FFA

Becky Littlefield
Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley FFA

Kristina Kay Lynch
Cuba FFA

Thomas Lynch
Cissna Park FFA

Correy Evan Rahn
Chadwick-Milledgeville FFA

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Tri-Point FFA

Seth Richolson
Stillman Valley FFA

Fahran Kathaleen Jaymes Robb
Pinckneyville FFA

Makahla Anne Robb
Pinckneyville FFA

Rylan Rusk
Olney FFA

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Cissna Park FFA

Jamie L. Scherer
Olney FFA

Bryan Daniel Schullian
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Nokomis FFA

Nicole L. Storm
Windsor FFA

Kaila Strubbe
Jacksonville FFA

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Sara Ashley Totsch
Liberty FFA

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Somonauk-Leland FFA

Krista Ubbenga
Hartsburg-Emden FFA

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Bluffs FFA

Andrew Whalen
Franklin FFA

Dena Marie Wibben
Olympia FFA

Anna Marie Ziegler
La Harpe FFA

Jason L. Zwilling
Sherrard FFA

Idaho

Ashley Allison
Payette FFA

Marie Fabricius
Fruitland FFA

Kelly Farrens
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Rigby FFA

Bradley Allen Hale
Rigby FFA

Wayne Dorsee Hancock
Buhl FFA

Jeff Hartman
Parma FFA

T.J. Heiniger
Troy FFA

Kara Jackson
Meridian FFA

Jarom Jemmett
Parma FFA

Teresa M. Jones
Filer FFA

Ginevra Dahl Knox
North Gem FFA

Sara Kuespert
Troy FFA

Blake Loveland
Cambridge FFA

Amelia Ann Naher
Fruitland FFA

Shawna Orthel
Meridian FFA

Hannah Rich
Payette FFA

Shane Robins
Burley FFA

Beau N. Ruiz
Fruitland FFA

Joshua Sanders
Kuna FFA

Brock Searle
Burley FFA

Cody Searle
Burley FFA

Lindsey D. Sharrock
Troy FFA

Chad Smith
Burley FFA
Eric Sutton
Troy FFA
Tyler C. Turnbull
Cambridge FFA
JenaLee Jean Udy
Genesee FFA
Stetson Darys Wilson
Highland FFA
Courtney Woodworth
American Falls FFA
Tyler J. Zollinger
Mackay FFA
Hawaii
Khelsie Camalliri-Langtad
Kauai High FFA
Denna Macanas
Leilehua James Dole FFA

Georgia

Ward Black
Jackson County FFA
Hope Jessica Burge
Chattooga High FFA
Josh Lamar Carlton
Colquitt County FFA
Kevin Carter
Jeff Davis FFA
Jared Clark
Thomas County FFA
Thomas E. Dalton
Banks County FFA
Nicole Cisson Fowler
Franklin County FFA
Robert Vance Gafnea, III
Central of Carroll FFA
Erin Graham
Jeff Davis FFA
Justin D. Grimsley
Tri-County FFA
Jeri Anna Guthrie
Cook County FFA
Edward Harris
Crawford County FFA
Bradley Phillip Hart
Wayne County FFA
Garret Hortman
Thomas County FFA
Dillon Kyle Hutchinson
Jeff Davis FFA
Clayton J. Lee
Screven County FFA
Ransom E. McArthur
Gilmer County FFA
Zachary T. Murphy
Colquitt County FFA
Casey New
Jeff Davis FFA
Michael Spence Pisciotta
Tift County FFA
Brooke Powell
Oconee County FFA
Phillip Rentz
Jeff Davis FFA
Paul A. Ruddle II
Lowndes County FFA
Scott Brian Rushing
West Laurens FFA
Heather Savelle
Oconee County FFA

Brandon Scherer
North Hall FFA
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Phillip A. Spell
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Meredith K. Stovall
Elbert County FFA
Keri Surrency
Wayne County FFA
Sarah Beth Swain
Jeff Davis FFA
Anna Marie Taylor
Cook County FFA
Cecil Walls
Jeff Davis FFA
Chasity Williams
Jeff Davis FFA
Nile Williams
Jeff Davis FFA
Cole Yawn
Jeff Davis FFA
Amanda Zittrouer
Effingham County FFA

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Andrea Lauren Andrews
Lake Butler Senior FFA
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South Lake Senior FFA
Robert John Campbell
Durant Senior FFA
Doug Carter
Suwannee Senior FFA
Kevin Dasher
Suwannee Senior FFA
Brandon M. Davis
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Salvatore Diiorio
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South Lake Senior FFA
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Tampa Bay Tech Senior FFA
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Riverview FFA
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Southeast Manatee Senior FFA
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Bartow Senior FFA
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DeLand Senior FFA
Sarah Johnson
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Pine Ridge FFA
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Suwannee Senior FFA
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Suwannee Senior FFA
Kelvin Moreno
Miami Senior FFA
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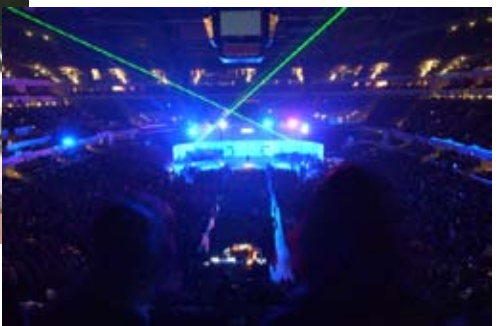
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