proceedings

FFA makes it ReaL

74th National FFA Convention

October 24-27, 2001

Volume LXXIIII

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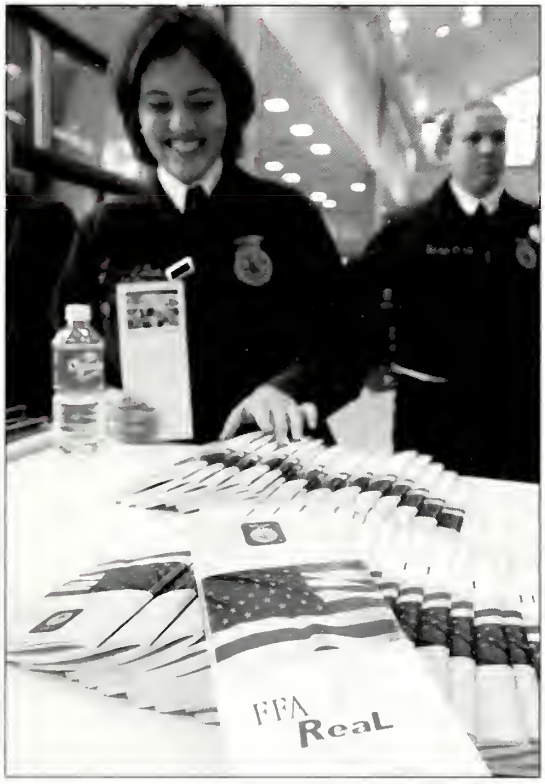
VOLUME LXXIV



Wales Hunter

Members from across the country were excited to arrive and register for the national FFA convention.

The 74th National FFA Convention *Proceedings* is published by the National FFA Organization as a record of its annual convention held in Louisville, Kentucky, October 24-27, 2001.

Editor
Nicole Bishop, Indiana

Associate Editors
Sara Brown, Missouri
B.J. Fett, Montana
Jenny Hunter, Indiana
James McNary, Missouri

Photo Editor
Nicole Bishop, Indiana

Art Director
Steve Richards, Indiana

Photo Processors
Emily Bisdorf, Ohio
Kelley Yates, Kentucky

Photographers
J. Gillis Courson, Kentucky
Jim Davis, Iowa
Sam Harrel, Alaska
Wales Hunter, Kentucky
Kelly Rogers, Minnesota
Cindy Stucky, Kentucky
Ed Zurga, Kansas

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FFA makes it ReaL

Ed Zurga

These FFA members enjoyed visiting with their chapter and friends they met from around the nation.

Welcome to Louisville

Ed Zurga

The American flag welcomed each convention visitor and provided a great patriotic setting.

Blue jacket sightings were constantly being reported in Louisville, Kentucky, during the 74th National FFA Convention held Oct. 24-27 at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center. Members from 7,312 chapters in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands flew, drove or rode to convention to experience "FFA Makes It Real."

FFA members were encouraged to make FFA real in their lives and to take those lessons back to their chapters and communities. Guest speakers, national officers and workshop presenters reminded members that success starts within the members themselves.

After the September 11 terrorist attacks, FFA looked for ways to support those affected by the tragedy. Blue and gold glow wands were sold before each convention session, and proceeds were donated to the New York Police & Fire Widows' & Children's Benefit Fund. The band, chorus and talent all made special efforts to include patriotic songs in their performances. Also, the opening of several convention sessions showed a patriotic video on the big screen. In addition, FFA members participating in the floriculture CDE designed more than 150 red, white and blue floral arrangements for the competition and later delivered them to the local veterans' hospital.

FFA Makes it Real

During sessions, members listened to motivational and inspirational speakers including Dick Vitale, Suzie Humphreys and Bob Love. Each of these speakers were highly-charged, energetic people who provided real-life advice for FFA members to take home with them and incorporate into their lives. The convention was also honored to have the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Venemen speak on Friday morning.

The National FFA Band and Chorus, sporting traditional official dress, built the momentum before, during and after each session. Special talent performances were also part of convention sessions and the shopping mall.

Wales Hunter

FFA advisors dedicate much time and energy to the success of each and every one of their FFA members. Here, an advisor and her students plan their convention experience.

Ed Zurga

Members participated in 23 competitive events, such as the dairy cattle evaluation career development event (CDE) during convention.

FFA makes it ReaL

Ed Zurga

The national officers wowed the audience with their performance of NSync's hit "Bye, bye" during Reflections.

Sam Harrel

FFA members enjoyed the many activities in the career show.

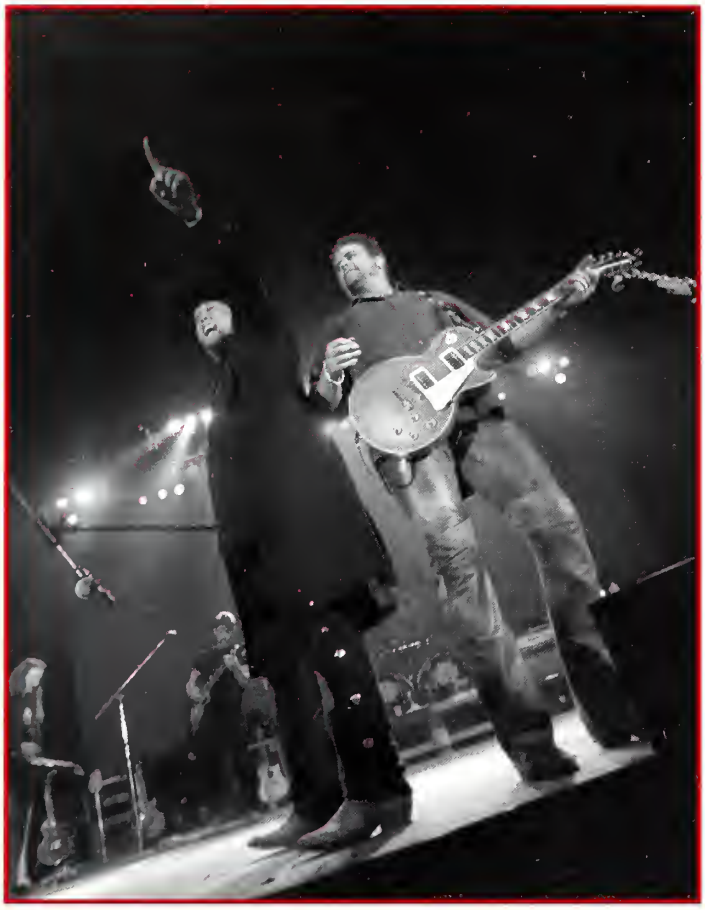
From farm gate to dinner plate, FFA members are involved in every aspect of the agricultural process. As a result, students competed in 21 career development events (CDEs), two demonstrations and one activity during convention. In addition, 46 proficiency awards were awarded to FFA members, recognizing them for exceptional supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs).

After starting and managing their own SAEs, FFA members gained valuable information and insight from the top industry and educational leaders at the 36th FFA National Agricultural Career Show®.

"I came to check out the scholarship and career opportunities," said Brandi Beruek of the Centerville FFA Chapter in South Dakota.

Over 370 businesses, corporations, colleges and universities set up displays for FFA members to win prizes, pick up resource information and learn about career opportunities. Favorite stops along the way included tree climbing, remote controlled car racing and trivia game shows.

FFA makes it ReaL



Kelly Rogers

Montgomery Gentry was one of the many musical acts that FFA members saw in concert. Eddie Montgomery is a former FFA member from Kentucky.

Wales Hunter

Kent Johnson was recognized for 15 years of continuous support to the National FFA Foundation. A former member, he was proud to show off that he could still wear his jacket!

After convention sessions, the fun didn't stop. Country superstars Montgomery Gentry and Jessica Andrews performed Thursday evening. Chris Cagle opened for Diamond Rio on Friday. Before each performance, the stars were available in the shopping mall to sign autographs.

In just eight seconds it's over. Yet for professional bull riders, eight seconds can be a lifetime. The annual Bluegrass Bull Bash proved to be a high-energy and exciting activity for FFA members. Will Helenthal of Iowa stole the show with a 92-point ride at the end of the fourth and final round.

Huge amounts of thanks are extended to the National FFA Foundation and Alumni for all the work they do in providing sponsors, volunteers and industry leaders to support FFA on the local, state and national levels. Without both of these organizations, FFA members wouldn't receive the awards or recognition that are now available.

FFA makes it ReaL

Another integral part of an FFA member's success is the support, guidance and time that advisors give. Without these teachers and the resources they put forth for students, members would not realize success through FFA.

FFA members used their knowledge to help others when they paired Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS) volunteers with over 500 elementary students in the Louisville area. They taught the children about different aspects of agriculture. Other FFA members joined with Kentucky Harvest to participate in the "Million in a Month" campaign, which raised over one million pounds of food between October 15 and November 14. Tallies showed that the goal was surpassed before convention even started. FFA is continuing the tradition of community service, along with the agricultural community, to feed the world.

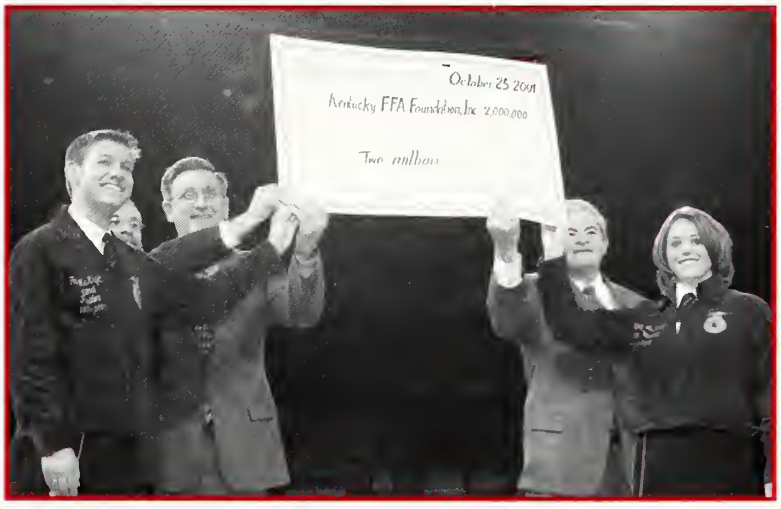
FFA "made it real" during the convention, providing members, guests and sponsors with an opportunity to enhance their knowledge, prepare for the future and have fun at the same time. FFA members will continue on their road to premier leadership, personal growth and career success if they remember: "It starts with you!"

Kelly Rogers

Members enjoyed the dances and this year had a choice between hearing tunes spun by a deejay or a local live band.

Wales Hunter

Pre-session events, including sumo wrestling and other fun activities, kept the audience laughing and fired them up before each opening.



Wales Hunter

The state of Kentucky showed their support of the Kentucky FFA Association and the National FFA Organization.

stars over america

Exceptional supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs) truly stand out as Stars over America. It takes a strong constellation of support from advisors, parents and friends to develop a winning SAE, but at the 74th National FFA Convention, sixteen star finalists had a chance to shine, and four outstanding young men took home the top prize.

Ryan Sweeney of Mason, Mich., was honored as the Star in Agribusiness for his outstanding SAE in the area of agribusiness. Steven Friess of Neodesha, Kan., was decorated as the Star Farmer.

Kelly Rogers

Star Farmer Finalists

Steven Friess, 21
Neodesha, Kan.
Labette County FFA Chapter
American Star Farmer

In 1994, Friess reached his goal of owning a farm by his sixteenth birthday and now farms more than 1,000 acres and owns nearly 100 head of cow/calf pairs. He hopes to be a half-owner of the family farm in 10 years and expand to more than 10,000 acres, with livestock to match. Friess aspires to have a family and says that FFA has given him a chance to serve as a true role model for others.

Adam Hahn, 21
Cambria, Wis.
Randolph Cambria-Friesland FFA Chapter

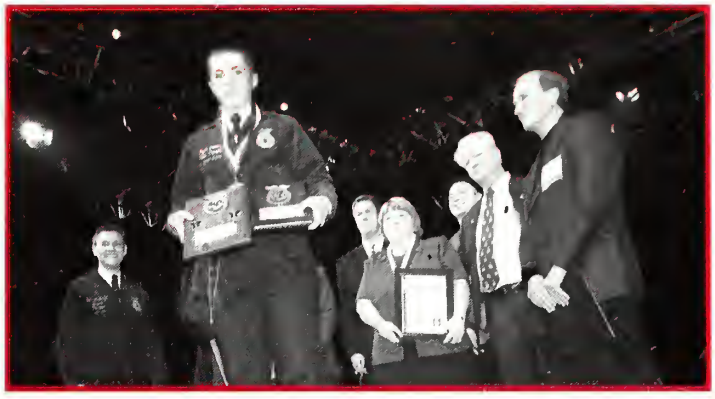
Becoming interested due to his brother's success, Hahn began farming 107 acres as a sophomore in high school and now owns and operates 320 acres with rights to others. Hahn also built up a sizeable hog operation and then moved to beef. He plans to purchase his father's farm and have 800 acres in the next 10 years. He attributes his success to FFA because of the diverse experiences, especially those related to his SAE. Hahn was also a winner of the National FFA Agri-Entrepreneurship Award as a result of his accomplishments and success in his business.

Wes Kahoe, 21
Mooreland, Okla.
Mooreland FFA Chapter

Kahoe began in 1994 with 110 rented acres secured with a low-interest loan from his grandfather. Now Kahoe includes custom work on about 3,500 acres, owns 140 cows and rents and farms 600 acres in wheat. His future goals are to continue expanding his farm to include 500 cows and 2,000 acres. Kahoe credits much of his success and love of production agriculture to his grandfather, who has provided him with tremendous support and advice.

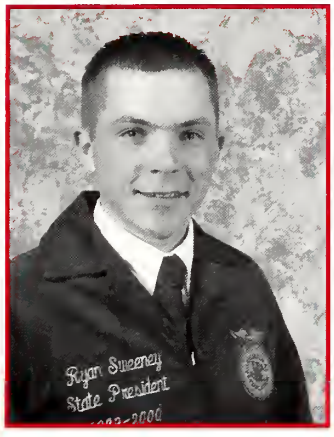
Tyson Sanderfur, 21
Hartford, Ky.
Ohio County FFA Chapter

Being a third generation farmer has always been a dream of Sanderfur. Since 1994 Sanderfur has expanded his operation, as finances have allowed, to include corn, wheat, cattle and swine, along with custom work. The result has been increases in profit margins of grain bought and sold. Tyson said FFA has given him the knowledge, confidence and desire to succeed. Sanderfur hopes to expand to more than 1,000 acres by the time he graduates from college.



Kelly Rogers

Star In Agribusiness Finalists



Ryan Sweeney, 19
Mason, Mich.
Mason FFA Chapter
American Star in Agribusiness

One of Sweeney's grandfathers is a carpenter; the other is a tool-and-die maker. Both raise hogs, so it seemed inevitable that Sweeney would end up building things in the livestock industry. After he learned to weld in the eighth grade, he and his father were encouraged to market their cattle-blocking chutes after building one for a friend. The father-son team quickly built a business. Sweeney is realizing his dreams and career success through his SAE.

Chris Brossart, 20
Barton, N.D.
Rugby FFA Chapter

Inspired by the way his father managed the family farm, Brossart began his business managing 72 acres for an uncle. He has grown his operation and now manages 460 acres. In addition, he started a custom ground spray business covering 40,000 acres a year. He has learned that hard work and a strong relationship with a local financial institution are important to obtain the necessary resources to be successful. Brossart plans to apply his life experiences as he faces challenges on his own farm.

Joseph Skelly, 21
Janesville, Wis.
Janesville Parker FFA Chapter

Selling his family's excess from four rows of sweet corn at a small stand was the beginning of Skelly's SAE in 1989. Since then, he has constructed two greenhouses, increased his acres in produce production and even purchased wholesale produce for resale. He now hires high school students to pick the sweet corn. Skelly quickly learned that he enjoyed owning and operating a business and is looking forward to a bright future.

Deanna Thies, 19
Glasgow, Mo.
Glasgow FFA Chapter

Helping out with her family's lawn and garden led to Thies building her own greenhouse and eventually being named a National FFA Agrientrepreneurship Award Winner. From her start at a young age, Thies has developed a business that markets asparagus, strawberries, rhubarb, perennial flowers and more through several farmers markets. Seeking expansion, Thies also developed a plan to use empty plots owned by retired citizens in exchange for year-round maintenance, giving her more land on which to grow her produce.

stars over america

Two new award areas were introduced this year, and Nicholas Streff of Salem, S.D., was bestowed as the first Star in Agricultural Placement. Steven Offer of Auburndale, Wis., was honored as the first Star in Agriscience.

The award recognizes the best of the best of the year's American FFA Degree recipients. These members' years of hard work, dedication and determination have paved a way for them to experience much future success.

Kelly Rogers

Star in Agricultural Placement Finalists

Nicholas Streff, 20
Salem, S.D.
McCook Central FFA Chapter
American Star in Agricultural Placement

Described as highly competitive and something of a perfectionist, Streff has been working on the farm since 1987. He now works on a 2,700-sow farrow-to-finish swine unit located on four sites. In addition he also constructs grain bins for a local welding company and has worked for the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Streff helped introduce new systems to the farm's production processes and believes he will work in the swine industry in the future. He takes pride in his accomplishments and that he can perform the skills he learned more efficiently now than when he began.

Rick Flesner, 20
Camp Point, Ill.
Camp Point Central FFA Chapter

While pursuing a degree in animal science from Southern Illinois University, Flesner works as he has since high school at Camp Point Seed Co. He also works for AB Holsteins where he learned the dairy business fundamentals and eventually worked his way into a supervisory position. His farming background has helped him understand the different concepts and ideas of the seed and dairy business. The knowledge and management skills he acquired through his SAE was the start of a successful livestock operation and will give him the skills necessary for successful employment with the companies.

Nathan Lockard, 21
Eolia, Mo.
Clopton FFA Chapter

Lockard buys, processes and packages items like ginseng, purpurea, golden seal and more as a purchasing agent for American Botanicals. His experience, including a business trip to Hong Kong, has shown him the value of a good work ethic and treating people with respect and dignity. He also has learned the importance of setting goals. His current goal includes learning as much as possible about the family herb business while building a portfolio through savings and investments.

Luis Manzano Jr., 19
Fresno, Calif.
Fresno-Washington FFA Chapter

Majoring in welding and fabrication at Fresno City College, Manzano has learned several construction techniques and perfected his welding skills. For more than five years, he has used his expertise to excel as a mechanic for Navarro Trucking Company. His father, a part-time welder and mechanic, taught him early on to build with pride and do his best. He hopes one day to have his own welding business.

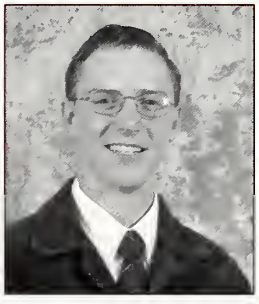
stars over america

Kelly Rogers

Star In Agriscience Finalists

Steven Offer, 21
Auburndale, Wis.
Marshfield FFA Chapter
American Star in Agriscience

Following a year of high school co-op work experience, Offer, a double major in medical genetics and dairy science, worked as an intern for three summers in a soil and forage analysis laboratory. His responsibilities include the planning and development of corporate-funded research, tissue sampling, the harvest and fertilization of research plots and his own research projects. Livestock production is another part of his SAE, which includes a herd of Holstein and Ayshire cows, where he has achieved a 23 percent increase in milk production through a breeding program.



Nicholas Bowser, 19
Mayetta, Kan.
Holton FFA Chapter

Currently, Bowser's research involves working to identify the chromosomal location of a gene resistant to leaf rust. One of the youngest students ever to receive an undergraduate research grant from Kansas State University, Bowser originally focused on production agriculture. Experiments and involvement in the Kansas Agriscience Fair grew his interest in laboratory work. Bowser learned the importance of leading by example, which to him means working hard in the classroom and his community.

William Dukes, 20
Lake Butler, Fla.
Lake Butler Sr. FFA Chapter

A minor accident that kept him from playing football helped lead Dukes to discover a passion in his life. After deciding to focus his efforts on research, he took a summer job at a University of Florida biochemical genetics lab focusing on maize research. That summer job became a part-time, year-round project. Duke plans on pursuing an M.S. in plant molecular and cellular biology and later hopes to open a new agriculture program in a high school.

Christine Lancaster, 19
Tulare, Calif.
Tulare Western FFA Chapter

After watching her father "catch bugs" every summer while growing up, Lancaster decided to work for her family's company, which researches and implements integrated pest management. She wanted to help farmers attain the highest crop performance possible. Today she is a field scout for the company, managing a small crew while collecting data on pesticide performance. Lancaster's future goal is to become a teacher.

national officer candidates

Wales Hunter

Fourty-one candidates competed for the six national officer spots for 2001-2002. These FFA members displayed their outstanding skills, talents and knowledge through personal and group interviews as well as written exams and activities.

National officer candidates waited on pins and needles all week, complete with cold sweats, shaky knees and sweaty palms, for the announcement of the 2001-2002 National FFA Officer Team. Forty-one candidates ran for the six positions. When they arrived on Sunday they took a writing exam, were assessed on their writing ability and completed six extensive rounds of interviews. A selection committee composed of nine official FFA delegates, representing the membership geographically, judged the candidates.

The announcement of the new officers was the last item of business during the final session on Saturday afternoon. Each officer will take a year-long leave of absence from their university studies to represent FFA and agricultural education as they travel and meet influential business, education and government leaders, as well as FFA members.

National Officer Candidates reception sponsored by ABG, Inc. as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

Alabama: Tremayne Wilson, Billingsley
Arizona: Melinda Peterson, Willcox
Arkansas: Ryan Maloch, Emerson
California: Dane White, Eureka
Colorado: Karrie Blake, New Raymer
Connecticut: Hilary A. Sepe, Woodbury
Delaware: Jeffrey A. Billings, Caesar Rodney
Florida: Barrett Keene, Plant City
Georgia: A.J. Davis, Irwin
Idaho: Sedric Trevithick, Highland
Illinois: Robin Niehaus, Hillsboro
Indiana: Scott E. Priebe, Southmont
Iowa: Randall J. Dreher, Adair-Casey
Kansas: Beth Ludlum, Uniontown
Kentucky: Chad R. Aull, Daviess
Louisiana: Ashley C. Garber, Iota High
Maryland: Matthew Koerner, Harford Tech
Michigan: Brandon Lupp, Unionville-Sebewaing Area
Minnesota: Sarah L. Clemenson, Zumbrota-Mazeppa
Mississippi: Patrick H. Black, Weir
Missourri: Colleen Griswold, North Shelby
Montana: Austin Knudsen, Culbertson
Nebraska: Robyn M. Yule, Bloomfield
Nevada: Andrea M. Paris, Ruby Mountain
New Hampshire: Sarah E. Mortenson, Pinkerton Academy
New Mexico: Britt M. Carter, Clayton
New York: Juleah F. Tolosky, Northern Adirondack Central
North Carolina: Brittany F. Whitmire, Rosman
North Dakota: Amber Haugland, Divide County
Ohio: Carrie B. Rhoades, Versailles
Oklahoma: Robyn R. Sites, Mountain View-Gotebo
Oregon: Audrey Stockhoff, Union
Pennsylvania: Elio Chiarelli, Jr., H.G. Parkinson
South Carolina: Franklin L. Davis, Britton's Neck
South Dakota: Clay Edward, Artesian-Letcher
Tennessee: Shannon K. Reburn, Munford
Utah: Laurel D. Evans, Weber
Washington: Abbie V. Kammerzell, Colfax
West Virginia: Glendoria Hatfield, Cabell Midland
Wisconsin: Richard D. Henningfeld, East Troy
Wyoming: Marty R. Tatman, Southeast

agri-entrepreneurship awards

Sponsored by and in partnership with the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership at the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

Ten students demonstrating high levels of initiative and supreme planning skills in their businesses were honored with the National FFA Agri-Entrepreneurship Award. These individuals worked hard to create their businesses using agricultural products, ensuring the future of diverse agricultural markets and their career success. Entrepreneurial skills are very important to the future and stability of the agricultural industry. These diverse businesses ranged from bee leasing to communication technologies, with everything from club lambs to daylilies in between.

Each award winner received $1,000 and was recognized during a convention session. In addition, their chapter advisors also received $500 to promote entrepreneurship within their chapters.

Rikki Ackerman of Bakersfield, Calif., owns The Ruminant, which manufactures and sells models of ruminant stomachs to agricultural education institutions. The business grew out of a lab on ruminant biology and digestion. After some classmates were absent, Ackerman looked for ways to preserve the stomach for them, other classes and possible in-class visitors. She markets her model via the Internet and later plans to contact larger catalog sales organizations that serve the educational marketplace to market the product through their sales tools.

Dolly Jane Barnes of Selmer, Tenn., owns Blue Ribbon Honeybees, a business that leases beehives to farmers for crop pollination. The company also sells honey, beeswax and bee pollen through local retail establishments. Barnes discovered that the population of wild bees in her area had decreased due to tracheal and varroa mites, so cotton and vegetable farmers were searching for sources of bees for pollination. She purchased used equipment from other beekeepers and ordered enough bees to establish four hives.

Craig Dobbins of Durant, Iowa, owns and operates Craig's Restoration and Repair. The business offers services such as welding, machine work and restoration of older farm machinery including tractors, water wagons and threshing and horse-drawn implements. This diversity has attracted customers from a three state area in addition to local individuals and businesses. Craig's Restoration and Repair really took off after he started displaying a restored John Deere A at local shows and parades. A farmer then asked questions about overhauling a tractor, giving Dobbins his first job.

Ben Drescher of Alden, Minn., is part owner of Drescher Club Lambs that produces quality lambs for 4-H and FFA members across the United States. He shears lambs for buyers who do not own a set of clippers or a clipping stand, saving time and developing strong customer relations. While most of his customers are local, he markets his lambs via private treaty and at several large lamb auctions. He also uses a website, www.clublambs.com/drescher/index.htm, to show available animals and bloodlines and where lambs will be sold.

Lucas Haag of Bartley, Neb., owns Silver Creek Technologies, encompassing sales and services for computer systems and two-way radio systems including mobiles and hand-held repeaters. They offer a two-way radio remote monitoring and control system for irrigation pivots, SeedPAC, a seed sales accounting package and AcreView, a simple record-keeping application. He identified the opportunity for the business after installing a radio system for his family and the retirement of a dealer in the area.

Brett Nunnenkamp of Sutton, Neb., owns The Country Pumpkin, which produces and sells 17 varieties of pumpkins ranging from one-half to 40 pounds each. He also sells a variety of edible and ornamental squash, gourds and Indian corn. In the future, he hopes to add other products. He identified this business opportunity after his grandfather and he grew some pumpkins and sold them in their driveway and had fun doing it! They market excess products to local businesses and fruit and vegetable stands, where one establishment bought more than 12,000 pounds of pumpkins.

Katie Schmidt of Schuyler, Neb., owns Katie's Daylilies, which produces tetraploid spider daylily cultivars. Schmidt began the hybridizing process in 2000, and seedlings will flower in a few years. Schmidt plans to offer registered new cultivars and hopes to sell seeds and stock via the Internet, as well as through catalogs and nurseries. Schmidt pursued this business because of her skills in plant genetics and an interest in propagation.

Drew Sponheim of St. Ansgar, Iowa, owns TenderLean Meats, a value-added pork business that offers a wide selection of products ranging from bacon, pork tenderloins, sliced ham and pork chops, to ribs. Products are sold door-to-door and through area grocery stores, including two Hy-Vee stores, as a way to increase Sponheim's return rates on the hogs he raises with his brother. Future plans include a Christmas gift box, an Internet site and to sell the product through schools, restaurants and assisted living facilities.

Juliana Van Egmond of Galt, Calif., owns and operates Juliana's Vegetable Garden, producing melons, corn, pickling cucumbers, dill, squash, gourds, pumpkins, onions and garlic. She sells products wholesale to area grocers and via a roadside stand located on a busy commuter thoroughfare. Her business started when she became frustrated at the quality of pickling cucumbers in her area. She uses techniques to ensure top quality, including picking early each morning for freshness and proper size.

Kurt Williams of Randolph, Wis., owns KW Trucking and Custom Combining, a business that offers custom combining of wheat, corn and soybeans, and hauling of harvested crops. Williams started his business as a senior in high school by purchasing a combine to shell his corn. Custom work and acreage was added to the operation to lessen capital costs after purchasing a semi-tractor trailer.

Jan Mattics Omernik

Students with self-motivation, determination and business savvy were honored at the entrepreneurship awards.

prepared public speaking

Wales Hunter

Danielle Buechler (right), a member of the Centerville FFA Chapter in South Dakota, gets a hug from another finalist as she was named the national prepared public speaking winner.

Expert tutelage, hours of practice and a well-written manuscript can result in an award winning speech. Once the speech is written to exact standards set by nationals, the speaker needs to practice hand gestures, voice fluctuations and memorization.

Each speech is six to eight minutes in length and is scored by a panel of judges. Contestants receive points for their manuscript and for the presentation of the speech.

After the presentation of the speech, each contestant has to field a series of questions asked by the judges, and the speeches have to be on a subject related to agriculture. Each speaker's technique is unique, and as he or she advances through the ranks at the local, district, state and eventually national levels, they become polished masters.

Sponsored by FMC Corporation, Agricultural Products Group as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

Frosted Flakes to Frosted Fakes:

Keeping our Consumers Informed
Danielle Buechler, South Dakota FFA Association

Every morning, my family has the same routine. Everyone stumbles out of bed, fights for the bathroom and heads to the kitchen to fix some breakfast. This hearty wholesome breakfast usually consists of nothing more than cereal in boxes with Tony the Tiger, Toucan Sam and Snap, Crackle, and Pop. These Kellogg's cereals have been a family favorite for years. I stretch out my morning yawns and pick up the newspaper. A large headline covered the front page stating "Frosted Flakes to Frosted Fakes." I put down my newspaper and stared at my family's cereal bowls.

People have come to know Kellogg as a company that they can rely on for high quality, nutritious foods wishing us "the best to you each morning." If this reputation is accurate, then why did over 28,000 consumers phone and write to Kellogg about their concerns over the food? The answer is simple. The consumers were concerned over Kellogg's use of genetically modified foods. Kellogg was forced to shut down production at one of its U.S. cereal plants. The company found corn that was StarLink corn. StarLink corn is a genetically engineered corn that has not yet been approved for human consumption. Consumers were concerned about their health and safety, but more importantly, concerned about their lack of knowledge about biotechnology.

According to a May 2000 survey performed by the Food Information Council, only one in every five Americans consider themselves informed about food produced with genetically modified organisms, or GMO's. Despite this lack of overall information, the Grocery Manufacturers of America report that during this year an estimated 70 percent of the foods found on grocery store shelves will have been made or manufactured using genetically modified crops.

As my mother pushes the cart down the aisles of the grocery store, she scans the store shelves for food to feed my family. Walking beside her is my eight-year-old brother, who is constantly tugging on her skirt with demands for her to buy the cereal with the coolest toy or his favorite, macaroni and cheese. But, my mother always checks the nutrition labels on the side of the box first. My brother's favorite products both have the possibility of containing GMOs. In America, consumers are becoming savvy about what they put into their bodies, and it is our responsibility, if we are truly going to advance this technology, to inform the consumer.

But how do we, as an agricultural industry, go about doing this? Let me ask you to place a brand with these slogans: "It's What's for Dinner," "Got Milk?," and "The Other White Meat." My guess is that this was pretty easy to do. These are all well established agricultural brands in the sense that as a consumer you are able to associate "It's What's for Dinner" to popular beef products, "Got Milk?" to calcium rich dairy products and "The Other White Meat" to wholesome pork products. As progressive agriculturists we should

ask ourselves, what kind of image does America associate with genetically modified foods?

We need to describe the benefits of the products in the marketplace today and those soon to come. Just imagine being able to help millions of children around the world who have lost their eyesight by simply eating dietary rice staples that are locally grown. Just imagine being able to reduce 500,000 deaths among American citizens from heart disease each year. Just imagine being vaccinated from a deadly disease by eating a piece of fruit. Biotechnology is already producing some of these innovations, and this is just the beginning.

Biotechnology also brings new promises to the farmer. Biotechnology allows the farmer to produce more food from the same amount of land in terms of increased productivity, conserving natural resources, reduced chemical inputs and promotes sustainable agriculture.

Foods derived from biotechnology are tested for safety. This rigorous regulatory process by which companies and agencies evaluate the safety of new products is performed more thoroughly than conventional varieties before they ever come to market. The Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration are all working together to ensure crops produced through biotechnology are safe.

On May 3, 2000, the FDA announced plans to mandate that developers of bio-engineered foods and animal feeds notify the agency when they intend to market such products. It is also proposed that all of this information will be made public by posting them on the FDA website for easy viewing.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration reassured the consumer by stating, "The important thing for consumers to know about these new foods is that they will be every bit as safe as the foods now on the store shelves. All foods, whether traditionally bred or genetically engineered, must meet the provisions of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act."

Consumer acceptance is yet another big issue. Negative headlines clutter our newspapers from Kraft's announcement to recall its Taco Bell taco shells to protests by Greenpeace to Europeans' rejection of "Frankenfood." Even the above-mentioned incident of the StarLink corn found in Kellogg's cereal turned into a negative headline calling Frosted Flakes, "Frosted Fakes." Headlines should read, "Biotechnology Can Cut World Hunger in Half by the year 2015" and "Biotechnology Holds Possibility of Reducing Energy Use by 50%."

We must explain the complexities as well as the importance of biotechnology to the general public from the human, animal, insect and plant perspectives in a positive light. With the agricultural industry welcoming its sixth billionth mouth to feed, we cannot afford not to educate and inform consumers. We must eliminate boundaries that have been placed upon biotechnology due to a lack of public literacy.

As for my family and me, as we sit at the breakfast table and pass the box of cereal, we all realize that we can look to the future with optimism. We know our breakfast cereal will only bring, "the best to you each morning."

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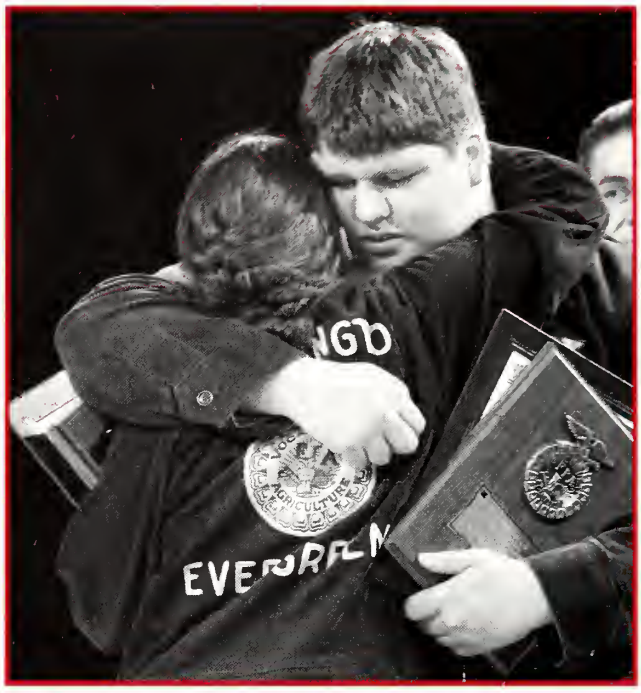
creed speaking

Sponsored by Papa John's International, Inc. as a special project of the National FFA Foundation



Wales Hunter

Davey Lopez of the Brighton FFA Chapter in Brighton, Tennessee, was thrilled to learn he was the national creed speaking winner. He is pictured hugging a fellow finalist.

The creed speaking CDE was designed to recognize outstanding 7th, 8th and 9th grade FFA members for their ability to present the FFA Creed from memory and answer questions on the meaning and purpose of it. As the national winner, Davey Lopez competed against 48 other participants to earn top honors while developing his ability to communicate in a powerful, organized and professional manner.

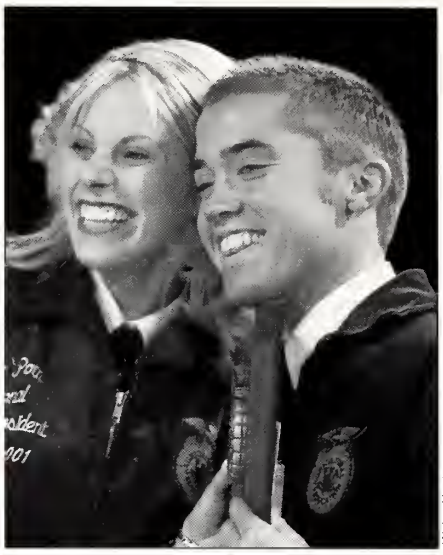
The National FFA Extemporaneous Public Speaking Career Development Event is designed to give FFA members the ability to express themselves on a given subject without having prepared or rehearsed its content in advance.

At the competition, this year's finalists randomly picked three out of 12 possible agricultural topics and then chose one on which they wanted to present their speech. Participants were then given exactly 30 minutes to prepare.

Despite the short preparation time, this year's participants did an excellent job making their delivery sound as if they had prepared for months.

extemporaneous public speaking

Sponsored by American Farm Bureau Federation as a special project of the National FFA Foundation



Wales Hunter

Luke Browning, a member of the Bear River FFA Chapter in California, smiles with excitement after being named the national extemporaneous public speaking winner.

National Extemporaneous Public Speaking Winner
Lucas Browning, California

Now, I come from a relatively small family. I live with my mom, my dad and my sister. My mom is a schoolteacher. She loves to teach students. But you know, sometimes I think she likes summer vacation a little better. My mom loves to garden during the summer, and she has one of the biggest gardens that I've ever seen. And usually she doesn't let me touch it. But one day, when I was nine years old, she did.

She let me water her garden because she had a meeting. So I watered it, then I went to bed. And the next morning, I woke to one of the scariest sounds that I can ever remember. "Lucas, get down here!" I jumped up out of bed. First thing that came to my mind was, "Mom's in trouble." So I ran to the door. I peered through the window, and mom was perfectly fine. So that just meant one other thing: Luke was in trouble. So I walked down to the garden where my mom was and then I noticed something. The night before, I had left the gate open to our garden, the deer had come in and they had eaten all of her vegetables. They had smashed her pumpkins, and my mom was devastated. And mad. My mom sent me up to my room to think about what I had done, but instead of thinking about what I had done, I thought about how it could have been prevented. I thought, "what if we had plants that smelled like mountain lions?" Why that would scare away the deer all right. Well it may not be feasible right now to create plants that smell like mountain lions, but the advances in biotechnology are like never before.

Biotechnology is creating new advancements for third world countries and food production. Today, I'm going to talk to you about exactly what biotechnology is, how it affects the agricultural industry and the future that it has in store.

First, biotechnology. Biotechnology is the intentional alteration of a part of a living organism by human intervention. Now this can be as simple as putting yeast in bread to make it rise or bacteria in yogurt to stop it from fermenting as it ages, or it can be as complex as creating designer plants and animals. Well, how does this relate to the agricultural industry?

Biotechnology relates to the agricultural industry and third world countries, because in third world countries, they're not as lucky as us. In countries like India, where they spend 50 percent of their annual income on food, they need to be creative. They need to have efficient agriculture systems and healthy agriculture produce. So they need to be able to lessen the cost. Farmers need to stop using as many pesticides because that would lessen costs. Well how do they do that?

Right now, we can create a potato plant that fights off the Colorado potato beetle. You see for years this beetle would come up, it would nibble on the roots of the potato plant and then the potato plant would die. But now, we can make a potato plant that exerts enzymes into the soil killing that Colorado potato beetle.

Why…we can also do a lot of other things with biotechnology. In third world countries, they don't eat as healthy as us. If they're spending 50 percent of their annual income on food, they don't have a lot to spend on medicine. In biotechnology, we can create things like golden rice, a rice strand that can be grown in India and the people could eat it. It would have iron in it to prevent anemia and beta carotene to prevent blindness in millions of kids. Advancements like that that are amazing and this brings me to my third point.

The future of biotechnology. Scientists are working on amazing things. For example, the deep water flounder…a fish that swims at amazing depths withstands amazingly cold temperatures. Well, strawberry plants can't withstand amazingly cold temperatures. So scientists are trying to take part of that flounder, the part that allows it to withstand such cold temperatures and implement into the strawberry plant, so they can be grown in harsher conditions and harsher climates.

We're also working on advancements so that students, kids, in third world countries, when they eat their apples, they'll also be getting a hepatitis shot. You see, we are being able to produce produce that's healthier, that will prevent diseases. And if we can do that, we'll be saving the lives of a lot of people.

You see, biotechnology and the advancements it has to offer creates a very efficient agricultural industry. It creates an industry that allows for safer food, that allows for food that's healthier, that allows for food that can be grown in harsher climates. Lettuce that can be grown using less water. And all of these things will help third world countries.

Now in conclusion, I think it becomes very clear to see the immense effect that biotechnology can have on third world countries and food production. I think we understand what biotechnology is, we know how it relates to the agricultural industry and we know the bright future that it has in store for us. Now, I realize that we can't make tomato plants that smell like mountain lions, but maybe one day, we will. And maybe one day, in India, those kids will be healthier.

Thank you.

agriscience student recognition program

national winner

Kara Butters
Homer FFA Chapter
Michigan
Advisor: Kevin Nugent

runner-up

Kelda Lee Penfold
Kingsburg FFA Chapter
California
Advisor: Jill Heuvel & Michael Mederos

national finalists

Ryan Brunner
Newell FFA Chapter
South Dakota
Advisor: Dave Ollila

Julie Noll
Greenwood FFA Chapter
Pennsylvania
Advisor: Dr. MeeCee Baker

Carl Norden
Pettisville FFA Chapter
Ohio
Advisor: John Poulson

Amber Lee Rhode
Gillett FFA Chapter
Wisconsin
Advisor: Mark Alden

Ashley Vadnais
Chillicothe FFA Chapter
Missouri
Advisor: Mr. Black, Mr. Dietzschold, Mr. Grozinger & Mr. Nowland

Jess Michael Waddell
Sutton FFA Chapter
Nebraska
Advisor: Tom Hofmann

Sponsored by Monsanto as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

Kara Butters' work with poinsettias earned her first place in the National FFA Agriscience Student Scholarship and Recognition Award Program, a plaque and $4,500 in scholarships.

Through classroom instruction, Butters found landscape management, botany and veterinary science to be interesting subjects. She pursued that interest to the highest extent possible and decided to complete a research project with poinsettias, entitled "The Use of Soft Pinches to Control Poinsettia Height: A Three Year Study." Since the marketability of a poinsettia largely depends on plant height, color and overall health, results like hers are extremely important to the poinsettia industry. A college freshman and a member of the Homer FFA Chapter, she is working toward becoming an agriscience teacher and FFA advisor.

National runner-up, Kelda Penfold of the Kingsburg FFA Chapter in California, researched the effects of ethylene on the cold storage life of apricots. The results gathered from the study will be important to the proper transportation of fruit to broadening agricultural markets. She hopes to share her fascination of agriscience with others by becoming an agriculture teacher. Penfold received $3,000 in scholarships and a plaque.

Cindy Stucky

Kara Butters, Agriscience Student winner, was recognized on stage for her accomplishments.

teacher of the year

Sponsored by Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc. as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

agriscience teacher of the year

National Winner:
Raymond N. Caviness, Eastern Randolph High School, Ramseur, North Carolina
National Finalists:
Lisa Paige Bynum, Heritage Middle School, Deltona, Florida
Darold G. Hehn, Rapid City Central High School, Rapid City, South Dakota
Russell Graves, Childress High School, Childress, Texas

Wales Hunter

Raymond Caviness, a North Carolina instructor, was thrilled to be named Agriscience Teacher of the Year.

Raymond Caviness teaches agriculture at Eastern Randolph High School in Siler City, North Carolina. Seven years ago, he began making efforts to revise the agricultural education program to include more opportunities in agriscience. Today, students can be found studying animal physiology, performing recombinant DNA studies, using water-sampling kits and observing the growth of trees. The success of the program is not only proven through an increased enrollment and interest from a wider variety of students, but also in the caliber of their work.

Recently, Caviness and his students received a USDA Challenge Grant to build and equip a facility to grow fish in fresh water tanks. Wastewater from the tanks will be used to grow plants by hydroponics. Seniors who graduate from the program are better equipped to handle rigorous college coursework and the real world of careers because of Caviness' influence.

Sponsored by Ford Motor Company Fund Scholarships sponsored by Ford Motor Company Fund and Caterpillar Agricultural Products as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

agriscience fair

The National FFA Agriscience Fair showcased students with interests in science and emerging technologies in agricultural enterprises. Students progressed successfully from the chapter and state levels to compete at the national level.

They are judged on knowledge, scientific approach, research, teamwork, thoroughness, a written report and visual display. Each winning participant returns home with a scholarship or cash reward.

WINNERS INCLUDE:

Category: Biochemistry/Microbiology/Food Science
Division I: Carissa Wilson, Moorefield Middle, West Virginia
Division II: Rachele James, West Central, Iowa
Division III: Brooke Adamson & Ashley Lange, Florence, Texas
Division IV: Kyle Kaufman & Beau Ellis, Canby, Oregon

Category: Botany
Division I: Erin Peterson, Adair-Casey, Iowa
Division II: Carl Norden, Pettisville, Ohio
Division III: Keri Matthews & Nikki Foster, J.F. Webb, North Carolina
Division IV: Clint Sadness & Darin Kilcoin, Woonsocket, South Dakota

Category: Engineering
Division I: Joseph Pfannes, Osceola, Wisconsin
Division II: Chris Nelson, West Central, Iowa
Division III: Lesley Krueger & Eric Rauschuber, Judson, Texas
Division IV: Leo Gracik & Jason Smith, Grover, Colorado

Category: Environmental Science
Division I: Cortney Timmons, Byng, Oklahoma
Division II: Lindsey Fimple, Vinita, Oklahoma
Division III: Laura Coffey & Allie French, Peter Muhlenburg, Virginia
Division IV: Erin Lewis & Bryan Tomm, Delavan, Illinois

Category: Zoology
Division I: Jessica Doege, East Central, Texas
Division II: Alyce Nejame, Santa Fe, Florida
Division III: Patrick Curran & Steve Duffield, Sisseton, South Dakota
Division IV: Tanner Holder & Matthew Fuston, Childress, Texas

H.O. Sargent awards

Ed Zurga

These incredible adults and members were recognized through the H.O. Sargent Award Program.

The H.O. Sargent Award began as the highest award of the New Farmers of America, the former African-American student agricultural organization that in 1965 merged into FFA. FFA renewed the award in 1995 to recognize FFA members and non-members who actively support and recognize cultural diversity. Originally, the award honored a young man ten years out of school and established in a farming career.

This year the member award was presented to Kerry Ryan Martens, a member of the Lyman Hall FFA Chapter in East Haven, Conn. Martens organized a partnership with Aitong Primary School in Narok, Kenya, so that FFA members and Kenyan students could communicate directly. The exchange focused on farming methods and agricultural concepts. Students and teachers learned about their separate cultures through discussions about common interests.

Recipients of this year's non-member awards were Dr. Curtis White of Clemson, S.C., Glenda Rae Sours of Magdelena, N.M., and Michelle Tell of Newport, N.C.

An associate professor at Clemson University, White was involved in adding a cultural diversity course to Clemson's agricultural education curriculum. He is now leading the effort to establish a museum highlighting the NFA.

Working with the individual interests of her students, Sours, a 12-year educator, held agricultural education in high regard at home as well as school. Her influence led her daughter to pursue a career in agricultural education also.

A teacher at West Cateret High School, Tell serves as the chair of her school's diversity team. She developed strategies to improve experiences for underrepresented students in agricultural education and to increase all academic subjects' range and accessibility.

Sponsored by Monsanto as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

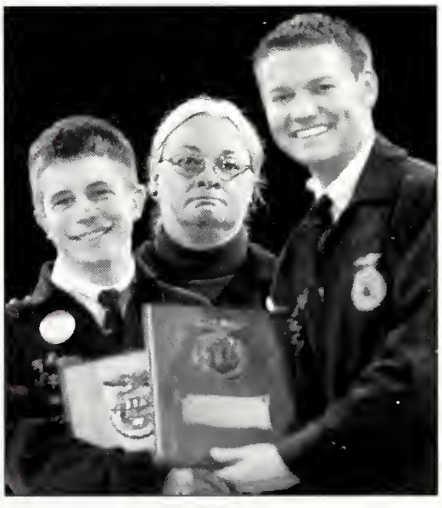
H.O. Sargent non-member

National Recipients:
NEW MEXICO: Glenda Rae Sours, Agriculture Teacher, Magdalena High School
NEW YORK: Michelle Bowen Tell, Agriculture Teacher/FFA Advisor, West Carteret High School
SOUTH CAROLINA: Curtis D. White, Sr., Associate Professor, Clemson University

H.O. Sargent member

National Winner:
CONNECTICUT: Kerry Ryan Martens, Lyman Hall High School

National Finalists:
NORTH CAROLINA: Jeanette Smith, Union High School
PENNSYLVANIA: Kendra Brookhart, Greenwood High School
VIRGINIA: Dajohn Washington, King William High School



Kelly Rogers

Kerry Martens shows his excitement after being named the student H.O. Sargent award winner for his work in establishing a partnership with a grade school in Kenya.

career development events

FFA members and teams put their skills to the test at the national level in 23 career development events (CDEs). Lessons learned in the agriculture classroom are challenged as members compete in the different events. FFA members participating in CDEs expand their technical knowledge while gaining decision-making and reasoning skills that will prepare them for career success.

At the end of the week results were announced and members were honored at banquets. Saturday's afternoon session recognized years of training and commitment when the winning teams and individuals crossed the stage to the applause of family, friends and fellow FFA members.

Career developments events are sponsored as special projects of the National FFA Foundation.

Agricultural Communications

Sponsored by Successful Farming

Winning Team: Sumner FFA Chapter, Sumner, Washington
Team Members: Carrie Swarthout, Kelsey Milligan, Sarah McPhee and Angie Voiles
High Individual: Sarah McPhee of Summer, Washington

Agricultural Issues Forum

Sponsored by Elanco Animal Health, A Division of Eli Lilly & Co.

Winning Team: Stamford Junior/Senior High School FFA Chapter, Stamford, Texas
Team Members: Allison Denson, Krista Sloan, Tiffany Ford, Brant Lundgren, Megan Denson, Emily Astin and Adria Wendeborn
High Individual: Adria Wendeborn of Stamford, Texas

Agricultural Mechanics

Sponsored by Firestone Agricultural Tire Company in conjunction with Bridgestone Firestone Trust Fund

Winning Team: River Falls FFA Chapter, River Falls, Wisconsin
Team Members: Joe Jensen, Kyle Killian, Brad Peterson and Phillip Rohl
High Individual: Phillip Rohl of River Falls,Wisconsin

Agricultural Sales

Sponsored by Monsanto Company

Winning Team: Southwest Star Concept FFA Chapter, Okabena, Minnesota
Team Members: Jessica Leopold, Lacey Horkey, Susan Volk and Janelle Madsen
High Individual: Lacey Horkey of Okabena, Minnesota

Agronomy

Sponsored by Aventis Crop Science

Winning Team: Buffalo FFA Chapter, Buffalo, Missouri
Team Members: Magan Wright, Blaine Leer, Matt Brown and Casey Rash
High Individual: Matt Brown of Buffalo, Missouri

Creed Speaking

Sponsored by Papa John's International, Inc.

National Winner: Davey Lopez, Brighton FFA Chapter, Brighton, Tennessee

Dairy Cattle Evaluation

Sponsored by Associated Milk Producers Inc. and Westfalia-Surge, LLC

Winning Team: Putnam County FFA Chapter, Eatonton,Georgia
Team Members: Daniel Burt, Katie Collis, Rodney Redd and Tricia Watson
High Individual: Jordan VanderVeen of Lynden, Washington

Dairy Foods

Sponsored by Dean Foods Company

Winning Team: Hillsdale FFA Chapter, Jeromesville, Ohio
Team Members: Megan Kaufman, Amanda Stoner, Tiffany Snyder and Greg McNaull
High Individual: Greg McNaull of Jeromesville, Ohio

Environmental & Natural Resources

Sponsored by ExxonMobil Chemical Company, Michelin Ag Tires and Mississippi Chemical Corporation

Winning Team: Eagles Landing FFA Chapter, McDonough, Georgia
Team Members: Jason Morris, Thomas Mittenzwei, Ryan Mayo and Elliott Lam
High Individual: Landon Loveall of Portland, Tennessee

Extemporaneous Public Speaking

Sponsored by American Farm Bureau Federation

National Winner: Luke Browning, Bear River FFA Chapter, Grass Valley, California

Farm Business Management

Sponsored by John Deere

Winning Team: Southwest Star Concept FFA Chapter, Okabena, Minnesota
Team Members: Adam Becker, Jory Hansen and Ryan Pohlman
High Individual: Cassie Hull of Montezuma, Iowa

Wales Hunter

CDEs cover a broad range of opportunities in the agricultural industry, including poultry evaluation.

Floriculture

Sponsored by American Floral Endowment, Ball Horticultural Company and National FFA Foundation, Inc.

Winning Team: Laurel Park FFA Chapter, Martinsville, Virginia
Team Members: Brandon Shively, Leslie Earles and Edward (Lane) Toler
High Individual: Jennifer Binkley of Bear Creek, North Carolina

Food Science & Technology

Sponsored by Dairy Farmers of America, Suiza Foods, The Coca-Cola Company and Ventura Foods, LLC.

Winning Team: Clear Lake FFA Chapter, Houston, Texas
Team Members: Megan Nemec, Jenna McPhail, James Legget and Derek Turner
High Individual: Anton Chiono of Paisley, Oregon

Forestry

Sponsored by BASF and Husqvarna Forest and Garden Company

Winning Team: Hermitage FFA Chapter, Hermitage, Arkansas
Team Members: Adam Green, Jacob Hollis, Brad McDougald and Lance Vickers
High Individual: Cade Lawrence of Monticello, Illinois

Horse Evaluation

Sponsored by DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund - Dodge Trucks, Roper Apparel and Footwear and Sundowner Trailers

Winning Team: Arroyo Grande FFA Chapter, Arroyo Grande, California
Team Members: Felicia Tuman, Natalie Wilson, Amy Frazier and Sara Corwin
High Individual: Natalie Wilson of Arroyo Grande, California

Job Interview

Sponsored by Tractor Supply Company

National Winner: Melanie Schotthofer, Cochrane-Fountain City FFA Chapter, Fountain City, Wisconsin

Livestock Evaluation

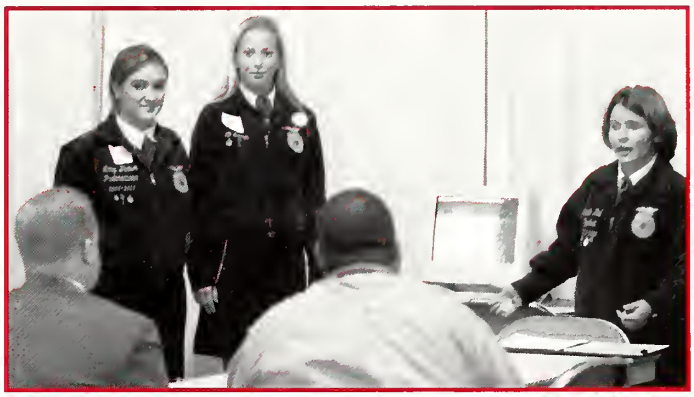
Sponsored by National FFA Foundation, Inc.

Winning Team: Paso Robles FFA Chapter, Paso Robles, California
Team Members: Heather Clement, Jeremy Monn, Joelle Peterson and Brady Cerda
High Individual: Brady Cerda of Paso Robles, California

Marketing Plan

Sponsored by Merial, Ltd.

Winning Team: James Madison, FFA Chapter, San Antonio, Texas
Team Members: Keri Bagley, Maggie Dezonia and Haley Mund



Wales Hunter

During the agricultural sales CDE, members make presentations to judges, honing their public speaking skills.

Meats Evaluation & Technology

Sponsored by Hormel Foods Corporation, IBP, Inc., Oscar Mayer Foods Corporation and Premium Standard Farms

Winning Team: La Vernia FFA Chapter, La Vernia, Texas
Team Members: Matthew Grun, Travis Hild, Krista Pruski and Michelle Turner
High Individual: Travis Hild of La Vernia, Texas

Nursery & Landscape

Sponsored by American Nursery & Landscape Association, Aventis Environmental Science, Kubota Tractor Corporation and Valent USA Corporation

Winning Team: Perry FFA Chapter, Perry, Georgia
Team Members: Derrick Catlett, Becky Reese, Amanda Hamsley and Kate Wilson
High Individual: Angela Becker of Okabena, Minnesota

Parliamentary Procedure

Sponsored by Syngenta Crop Protection

Winning Team: Sierra FFA Chapter, Tollhouse, California
Team Members: Ashley Baker, Stephanie Allen, Logan Page, Jacki Jones, Walt Page and Ashley Day

Poultry Evaluation

Sponsored by Aventis Animal Nutrition and Tyson Foods, Inc.

Winning Team: Springdale FFA Chapter, Springdale, Arkansas
Team Members: Allie Rhodes, Jodi Blair, Jennifer Perry and Ronan Bakker
High Individual: Jodi Blair of Springdale, Arkansas

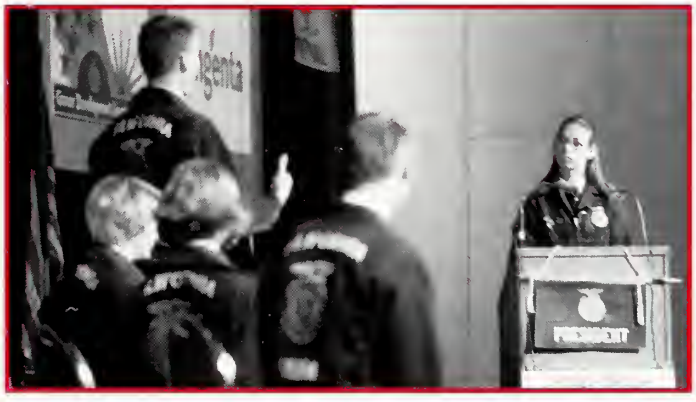
Prepared Public Speaking

Sponsored by FMC Corporation, Agricultural Products Group

National Winner: Danielle Buechler of Centerville, South Dakota

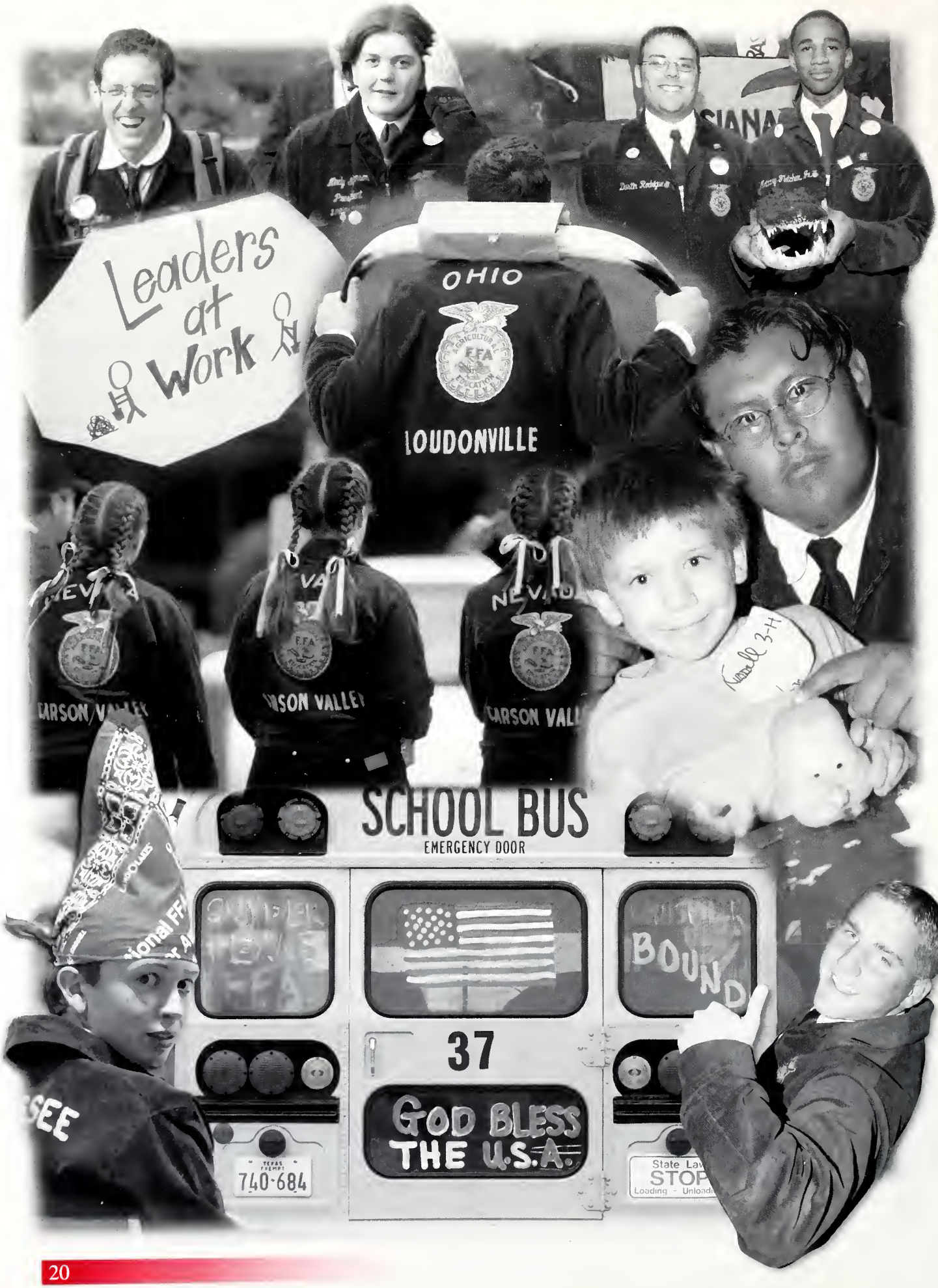
Wales Hunter

Members participating in the floriculture CDE designed red, white and blue arrangements, which were later delivered to the local veterans' hospital.



Wales Hunter

The parliamentary procedure CDE equips members with the skills needed to efficiently run a meeting.


Leaders at Work
OHIO
LOUDONVILLE
SCHOOL BUS
EMERGENCY DOOR
37
GOD BLESS THE U.S.A.
BOUND
740-684

national FFA band

Sponsored by Ford Trucks as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

DIRECTOR: Joe LaJoye, Hastings, Michigan

Alabama: Lindsey Lingerfelt, Geraldine

Arizona: Stephani Austin, Westwood; Grant Smith, Chino Valley

Arkansas: Heather Beliles, Mountainburg; Douglas Jones, Star City; Christopher Waters, Newark

California: Jaci Luxon, Livingston

Connecticut: Jarred Smith, Northwest Regional

Florida: Nicholas Caton, Keystone Heights Sr.; Natalie Sullivan, Keystone Heights Sr.

Idaho: Phyllis Sevy, Marsing

Illinois: Evan Bush, Unity; Marcie Freshour, Jerseyville; Sarah Hills, Tri-Point

Iowa: Megan Bashaw, Villisca; Lee Beck, LaPorte-Dysart; Ashley Berkler, Rockwell City-Lytton; Chris Grey, Lakeside; Amy Humpal, Decorah; Mindy Koch, Benton Community; Carina Meeker, Central City; Emily Nieman, Maquoketa Valley; Chelsea Peelen, Sheldon

Kansas: Matthew Carter, Altoona-Midway; Jessica Hicks, Jayhawk; Grant Klingenberg, Peabody-Burns; Crystal Stice, Cherryvale

Kentucky: Jonathan Morgan, Western Hills

Michigan: Daniel Fleetwood, Benzie Central

Minnesota: Eric Eng, Cannon Falls; Jonathan Gorentz, Perham; Ruth Neil, Zumbrota-Mazeppa; Luke Norell, Sibley East; Brian Paulson, Owatonna; Jonathan Seifert, Sleepy Eye; Marie Wichmann, Pelican Rapids

Missouri: Ginger Cantrell, Marshfield; Aaron DeJong, Pattonsburg; Nathan Granneman, Milan; Valerie Keltner, El Dorado Springs; Bianca Martin, Woodland; Phoebe Sage, Bronaugh; David Vinyard, Stockton; Jennifer Weiss, Jackson County High; John Yutz, Salisbury

Montana: Lynelle Brimmer, Broadus; Samantha Gundlach, Carter County; Thomas McClure, Missoula; Stephen Peterson, Sheilds Valley; Roy Webster, Beaverhead

Nebraska: Erin Bures, Diller-Odell; Damian Hoffmann, Pierce; Sara Hottovy, Freeman; Brent Nollette, Cody-Kilgore; Rachael Racine, Norfolk; Matthew Schulze, Norfolk

Nevada: Marissa Herold, Ruby Mountain/Elko

New Hampshire: Kari Smith, Pinkerton Academy

North Carolina: John Rains, Princeton; Michelle Scott, White Oak

North Dakota: Amanda Dostert, Berthold; Breena Johnson, Scranton; Adam Little, Bottineau

Ohio: Amanda Brimmer, Greenon; Dustin Brower, Canal Winchester; Luther Carson, Otsego; Chad Kirkpatrick, Plymouth; Cara Lawson, Ripley; Jared Moon, Miami Trace

Oklahoma: Katresa Brashears, Fairview; Kendra-Jo Brashears, Fairview; Charles DeBord, Chandler; Nathan Helvey, Lexington High School; Valarie Tatham, Sallisaw

Oregon: Jennifer Lacy, Clatsop

South Dakota: Amanda Mark, Tri-Valley; Katie McGuire, Colman-Egan

Texas: Nicole Burdick, Callalen; Kari Coker, Livingston; Roxanne Guerra, Rio Grande City; Lance Hausenfluck, Bryan; Lindsey Lott, Coronado; Jessica Lucia, Franklin; Kayla Sagebiel, Aledo

Virginia: Abram McConnell, Holston

Washington: Katie Munro Waterville; Zachary Ripp, Woodland; Sarah Schactler, Eatonville; David Soler, Arlington; Julie Zirkle, Eatonville

Wisconsin: Karen Brasda, Osseo-Fairchild; Staci Bruder, Prairie Farm; Aaron Burkhalter, Evansville; Melissa Dorner, Luxemburg-Casco; Jeremiah Eis, Mishicot; Angela Gerlach, Marshfield; Katie Gerlach, Marshfield; Melissa Hahn, DeForest; Cassandra Jensen, New Glarus; Mindy Lankey, Wonewoc-Center; Aaron Naatz, Johnson Creek; Amanda Nonnenmacher, Antigo; Kristin Pagel, Oconto Falls; Jaclyn Pettis, Augusta; Adam Stiemke, DeForest; Dana Tackes, Stratford; Nichole Trapp, Antigo

Kelly Rogers

The National FFA Band energized each of the convention sessions with a variety of musical numbers.

The National FFA Band performed several patriotic and energetic songs to keep the convention going strong. Participants arrived several days early and put in many hours of practice to prepare for their performances. Band and chorus joined together on songs like "God Bless America" during convention sessions. The band performed Friday evening in the National FFA Band and Chorus Concert, sporting traditional official dress. Incredible talent and dedication characterizes the band each year, and this one was no exception.

national FFA chorus

The National FFA Chorus sacrificed a lot of time and energy, using their talents to entertain and add a musical note to the national FFA convention.

The chorus arrived in Louisville, Kentucky, on Saturday to begin practicing together, spending nine hours per day perfecting their skills. After the convention's opening, they continued to commit two hours each day to practice.

Andy Schleusner of the Barron FFA Chapter in Wisconsin was a chorus member this year. He said that this once-in-a-lifetime experience was a great way to meet people. He also enjoys the "best view in the house," seeing convention up close and personal from the chorus' seats on the floor.

The chorus performed a wide variety of songs including "Bridge Over Troubled Waters," "You've Got a Friend" and "God Bless America."

Wales Hunter

Many National FFA Chorus members inspired convention goers' with their moving solos.

Sam Harrel

National FFA Chorus members lifted their voices and performed a wide variety of songs.

Sponsored by Ford Trucks as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

DIRECTOR: Patti LaJoye, Hastings, Michigan

ALABAMA: Erin Blankenship, Billingsley; Elizabeth Pirtle, Billingsley

Arizona: Christopher Steiner, DeWitt

California: Jamie Drew, Nevada Union; Jenna Feagin, Los Banos; Adam Hurley, Crescent City-Del Norte; Alillia Johnson, Serrano; Whitney Peskin, El Capitan

Colorado: Loretta Meier, Peetz

Connecticut: Jennifer Planz, Woodbury

Georgia: Merisa Clay, Warner Robins

Idaho: Angela Russell, Emmett

Illinois: Jessica Eickhoff, Nokomis; Lindsay Hess, Bushnell-Prairie City; Nathan Rahe, Hillsboro; Christina Rosentreter, Carlinville; Evan Sheckler, Avon; Charles Snyder, Barry; Diana Trantham, Camp Point Central; Kimberly Varnold, Spoon River Valley

Iowa: Mark Boender, Sheldon Golden Corn; Wyatt Sheeder, Guthrie Center Tiger; Sara Veldhuizen, Lynnville-Sully; Joshua Waller, Manson-Northwest Webster; Justin Wilkinson, Dewitt Central

Kansas: Jared Fish, Hillsboro; Tony Svaty, Ellsworth

Kentucky: William Wann, Fulton County

Louisiana: Keelin Leger, NHS Ch. 0266

Michigan: Kristi Mynhier, Bronson

Minnesota: Kristine Boen, Pelican Rapids; Stacy Lilienthal, Sibley East

Missouri: Mariah Gibson, Gallatin; David Hutchison, Vienna; Rachel Wyss, Russelville

Montana: Jodie Johnston, Forsyth; Ted Wiegand, Shelby

Nehraska: Jared Hartman, Laurel-Concord; Michaela Hoffman, Bayard; Amber Koch, Hartington; Rebecca Miller, Bayard; Tyler Neidermeyer, Ncmaha Valley; Greg Pohlmeier, Blue Hill; Shane Potter, Raymond Central; Kristinc Roit, Fillmore Central; Kane Schmall, Bayard; Carmel Shald, Norfolk; Casey Thompson, Medicine Valley; Timothy Varilek, Imperial; Michelle Wehling, Platte Valley Anadeng

North Carolina: Lindsay Rogers, James Kenan

North Dakota: Jordan Weeda, Wahpeton

Ohio: Joshua Davidson, Lynchburg-Clay; Lindsay Dennis, Preble; Angela Lowell, Hillsboro; Kalina Miller, Hillsdale; Lindsay Walton, Mohawk

Oklahoma: Joel Ambrose, Fletcher; Molly Hamlin, Collinsville; Joy Jenlink, Chisholm; Rebel Phillips, Ryan; Kirsten Scott, Drummond; Joshua Trent, Elk City; Ashley Wallace, Sharon Mutual; Matthew Wilson, Chelsea

Oregon: Javan lnget, Eagle Point; Andrea Loya, Oakland; Lacey Overholt, Hermiston; Jennifer Walker, Silverton

South Dakota Jesse Larson, DeSmet; Katee Larson, Woonsocket; Amber Sonnenberg, Woonsocket

Texas Fancy Dillard, Hallsville; John Galanis, West; Katerina Grab, Grapevine/Colleyville; David Gregory, Kirbyville; Christina Jacks, Kirbyville; Jacinda Judah, Snyder; Lacey Nixon, Uvalde; Amberly Sharber, Sulphur Bluff; Courtney Waller, Bryan; Mary Willeford, Dayton

Washington LaDina Dragon, Kahlotus; Joshua Kidwell, Heritage; Amanda Tjoelker, Nooksack Valley; Bridgette Todd, Cashmere

Wisconsin Jamie Dupee, Wisconsin Heights; Jonathan Edington, Johnson Creek; Sheena Krebs, Black Hawk; Corrie Lay, Gilmer County; Dusty Lochner, Lodi; Tracy Mueller, Cochrane-Fountain City; Ian Prust, Marshall; Andrew Schleusner, Barron; Joey Schuett, Dodgeland; Ryan Stanek, Gilman; Dana Wiegel, Darlington; Amy Wolf, Slinger

national FFA talent

Sponsored by Ford Trucks as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

DIRECTOR: Gary L. Maricle, Liberty, Missouri
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Robert Enbody, Kelso, Washington
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Scott Stewart, Leeton, Missouri
Alabama: T.C. Barnett, Eufaula; Deana Berry, Red Bay; Lee Berry, Red Bay; Aaron Brown, Enterprise; Beverly Brown, Enterprise; J.B. Buck, Enterprise; Jamil Cummings, Eufaula; Devin Dotson, Red Bay; Josh Elliott, Enterprise; Daniel Griffin, Eufaula; Richard Hardwich, Enterprise; Kristin Holland, Red Bay; Brent Hudgens, Enterprise; Maria Humphries, Red Bay; Katie James, Red Bay; William James, Red Bay; Alesha Jerrel, Enterprise; Kristen Lee, Enterprise; Leia Luther, Enterprise; Jonathon Mangino, Red Bay; Patrick McCollum, Red Bay; Allen McCraney, Eufaula; Chris McMahan, Enterprise; Dana Medley, Eufaula; Gretchen Nagel, Enterprise; Geoffrey Shirley, Eufaula; Christie Smitherman, Eufaula; Daniel Taylor, Enterprise

Arizona: Elizabeth McRoberts, Mayer

Arkansas: Marti Dawson, Clinton

California: Megan Jacobsen, Easton-Fresno; David Pilcher, Easton-Fresno

Delaware: Jaymie Joynes, Delmar

Georgia: Brandon Giddens, Berrien County

Hawaii: Heather Kihara, Leilehua (James Dole)

Idaho: Chace Elkington, Firth; Afton Hollingsworth, Preston; Thoren Spearow, Kuna

Illinois: Cari Ingle, Williamsfield; Erin Pigg, Bushnell-PC

Iowa: Sarah Kleihauer, Akron-Westfield

Kansas: Cailin Wilson, Jayhawk-Linn

Michigan: Katheryn Majeske, Grant

Minnesota: Nathan Vandervoort, Buffalo Lake-Hector

Missouri: Kyle Burnett, Pleasant Hope; Chad Graves, Pleasant Hope; Ashley Jackson, Pleasant Hill; Katie Jo Scott, Pleasant Hope; Dustin Stokes, Pleasant Hope; Joseph Stokes, Pleasant Hope

Montana: Jason Parker, Ryegate; Bryan Paugh, Ryegate

Nebraska: Gretchen Bergquist, Platte Valley

Ohio: Taryn Baker, Carrollton

Oklahoma: Valerie Campbell, Coalgate; Jodi Davis, Elk City; Dawn Drummonds, Stigler; Hailee Holliday, Coalgate; Micah Huey, Elgin; Jennica Kinney, Mooreland; Dustin Ladd, Cushing; Micah Perry, Elk City; Anna Trissell, Elk City

Oregon: Elias Eiguren, Jordan Valley

Pennsylvania: Kendy Gable, Northern Bedford

South Dakota: Nicholas Fosheim, Webster

Tennessee: Nicholas Ball, Cocke County; Matthew Turner, Cocke County

Texas: Brady Barnett, Kirbyville; Britney Blanscet*, Crosby

Virginia: Maria Lecrone, Clarke County

Wisconsin: Shane Westphal, Big Foot; Brianne Wurtinger, Turtle Lake

*Participated in National FFA Talent last year but was inadvertently left off of list.

The National FFA Talent once again amazed the crowd with unmatched singing, instrumental music and dancing during the National FFA Talent Revue. It was held Thursday evening before the third general session in Freedom Hall and included a variety of acts. The Enterprise Chapter band, from Alabama, performed a version of "I Hope You Dance." Later, Brandon Giddens of the Berrien County FFA Chapter in Georgia sang a traditional George Strait song—"Amarillo By Morning"—just to name two of many performances given during the one and a half hour concert.

Performers danced the night away with traditional routines, a unique hula performance and Scottish dancing. Members got involved during upbeat songs by swing dancing in the aisles and swaying calmly during slower ones.

More talent could be heard throughout convention sessions and in the shopping mall.

Sam Harrel

Talented FFA members from across the country strutted their stuff at a talent show before Thursday night's session. Performances included everything from a traditional hula dance....

Sam Harrel

....to a "sword dance" and anything in between.

proficiency awards

The three-pronged approach to teaching agriculture stresses classroom/laboratory learning, FFA participation and hands-on application of learning through supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs).

For all the hard work that students put into their SAEs, it is important to recognize them for their effort and success. Proficiency awards are presented to outstanding programs in 46 categories. Students can work in the agricultural industry and apply for a placement proficiency award, or they can start their own business and apply for an entrepreneurship proficiency award.

Finalists all received plaques and a cash award and winners were presented an additional cash award. The intent of the program is to give students a head start in a career with the support of family, friends and teachers who can help them reach and achieve their goals.

Proficiencies are sponsored as special projects of the National FFA Foundation.

Kelly Rogers

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS
Sponsored by cmf&z and Farm Progress Companies, Inc.
Idaho: Nicki Langley, Fruitland
Kansas: Audrey E. Young, Erie
Ohio: Jared M. Ross, Lincolnview
Tennessee: Gary A. Jenkins, Riverside

AGRICULTURAL MECHANICS DESIGN AND FABRICATION
Sponsored by Hobart Welding / Institute; Daimler Chrysler Corporation Fund - Dodge Trucks
Indiana: Melvin Gideon, Shenandoah
Kansas: Christopher Pachta, Linn
Minnesota: Russell Adrian, Butterfield-Odin
Utah: Jesse Ellertson, Fremont

AGRICULTURAL MECHANICS ENERGY SYSTEMS
Sponsored by New Holland North America
Arizona: Bryan J. Geiger, Peoria
Minnesota: Russell P. Goetze, Chaska
North Carolina: Chris Jones, Piedmont
Ohio: Jonathan B. Maust, Miami Trace

AGRICULTURAL MECHANICS REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE
Sponsored by CARQUEST Corporation
Illinois: Chris Avise, Southeastern
Iowa: Joseph Hungerford, Osage
Kansas: John M. Relph, Altoona
Oklahoma: Craig Murray, Lomega

AGRICULTURAL PROCESSING
Sponsored by Ag Processing, Inc.; Archer Daniels Midland Company; Consolidated Nutrition LLC.; The Kroger Company
Connecticut: Alden Page, Lyman Hall
Iowa: Bryce Rasmusson, Colo-Nesco
Minnesota: Joel E. Behle, United South Central
Oregon: Josh Trowbridge, Sheridan

AGRICULTURAL SALES - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by Chevy Trucks; GMAC
California: Nicolina Prestininzi, Fallbrook
Nebraska: Lucas A. Haag, Republican Valley
Texas: Jason Campbell, Hale Center
Wyoming: Dan Lehman, Powell Shoshone

AGRICULTURAL SALES - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by Tractor Supply Company; The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company; Vigortone Ag Products
Florida: Leslie K. Ambrose, North Marion Senior
Indiana: Matthew J. Roberts, Wawasee
North Dakota: Brian R. Lee, Wahpeton
Oregon: Gregory L. Minor, Dayton

AGRICULTURAL SERVICES
Sponsored by Chevy Trucks; New Holland North America; GMAC
Connecticut: Rachel Mazer, Woodbury
Kansas: Leanne Schemper, Northern Valley
Oklahoma: Gregory P. Root, Canute
Wisconsin: Seth R. Braker, Randolph Cambria-Friesland

BEEF PRODUCTION - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by Nasco Division/Nasco International, Inc.; Schering-Plough Animal Health
Idaho: Katie L. Colyer, Rimrock
Iowa: Jon Jacobs, Monticello
Virginia: Jason Arehart, Buffalo Gap
Wisconsin: Jeff Elmhorst, Granton

BEEF PRODUCTION - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by Cactus Feeders, Inc.; Evergreen Mills, Inc.; Fort Dodge Animal Health; KENT Feeds, Inc.
Illinois: Dan Lamoreux, Eastland
Kentucky: Daniel K. Lynn, Washington County
Virginia: Donald L. Smith, Fort Defiance
Wisconsin: Garrett Graber, Rio

proficiency awards

DAIRY PRODUCTION - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by DeLaval, Inc.; Pharmacia Animal Health
Indiana: Justin Moneyheffer, Warsaw
Iowa: Jaaron Walther, Tri-Star
Oklahoma: Rustin Pope, Lomega
Wisconsin: Jeremy D. Meissner, Marshfield

DAIRY PRODUCTION - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by Monsanto, Animal Agricultural Group
Minnesota: Ruth Ann Milbrandt, Blue Earth
Ohio: Lucas Ayars, Fairbanks
Pennsylvania: Melissa McWilliams, West Snyder
Wisconsin: Erik Blaser, Oconto Falls

DIVERSIFIED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION
Sponsored by National FFA Foundation, Inc.
Indiana: Craig Fruechte, Adams Central
Nebraska: Mark Reiman, Butte
Oklahoma: Ruth I. Bobbitt, Deer Creek-Lamont
South Carolina: Davis Peeler, Crescent

DIVERSIFIED CROP PRODUCTION - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by CHS Cooperatives
Minnesota: Michael P. Wellens, Chaska
Nebraska: Timothy Braun, Creighton
Texas: Jeremy McFerrin, Cotton Center
Wisconsin: Brian Maliszewski, Independence

DIVERSIFIED CROP PRODUCTION - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by National Crop Insurance Services; American Farm Bureau Insurance Services, Inc.; Rain & Hail Insurance Service, Inc.
Illinois: Marc Hoster, Seneca
Indiana: Chris Gentry, Triton Central
Michigan: Robert K. Haag, Unionville-Sebewaing
South Dakota: Renee J. Burns, Harrisburg

Kelly Rogers

DIVERSIFIED HORTICULTURE - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by Farmland Mutual Insurance Company/Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Company; Nationwide Foundation
Idaho: Mindy Jenkins, Kuna
Kentucky: Andrew Ford, Meade County
Missouri: John M. Graham Montgomery County R-II
Ohio: Jeremy Hill, Racine Southern

DIVERSIFIED HORTICULTURE - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by Bayer Corporation, Agricultural Division; Tomen Agro, Inc.
Indiana: Robert Davis, Prosser
Ohio: Tyler Wilt, Miami Trace
Texas: Johnna Ferris, Snyder
Wisconsin: Brenda K. Dowiasch, Augusta

DIVERSIFIED LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by ContiBeef LLC; National FFA Foundation, Inc.
Kansas: Amber E. Brazle, Erie
Montana: Kyle Carr, Hobson
Oklahoma: Rachel K. Bobbitt, Deer Creek-Lamont
Texas: Dustin D. Marsh, East Central

DIVERSIFIED LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by ContiBeef LLC; Allflex USA, Inc.; United Soybean Board
California: Garrett W. Pedretti, Dos Palos
Kentucky: Christina M. Hager, Meade County
New Mexico: David Beltran, Artesia
Utah: Robert Asay, Manila

EMERGING AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
Sponsored by Caterpillar, Inc.
Georgia: Christine Sheppard, Putnam County
Iowa: Michael E. Hosch, Cascade
Nebraska: Kylie J. Bearnes, Laurel Concord
South Dakota: Valeree Holzwarth, Gettysburg

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Sponsored by IMC Global, Inc.; Carolina Biological Supply Company
Idaho: Kayla Schwenkfelder, Cambridge
Kentucky: Michael S. Nutt, Meade County
Oklahoma: Heath S. Redwine, Kingfisher
Wisconsin: Amanda Beyer, Waupaca

EQUINE SCIENCE - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by Purina Mills, Inc.; American Paint Horse Association, Red Brand Non-Climb Horse Fence/Made by Keystone Steel & Wire Company
California: Luke J. Cardoza, Laton
Georgia: Abby E. Spruill, Jackson County
Montana: Milee Malone, Park
Wisconsin: Terry Schott, Denmark

EQUINE SCIENCE - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by Tractor Supply Company
Connecticut: Lisa Extance, Woodbury
Indiana: Kurt R. Bailey, Fairfield
Kansas: Jarret Gowdy, Arkansas City
New York: Lisa A. Polewczak, Schuylerville

FIBER AND/OR OIL CROP PRODUCTION
Sponsored by Syngenta Seeds, Inc.; United Soybean Board
Minnesota: Corey B. Olson, Chaska
South Dakota: Steve Kuecker, Webster
Tennessee: Donald M. Baskin, Brighton
Wisconsin: Justin Rezek, Denmark

FLORICULTURE
Sponsored by American Floral Endowment; National FFA Foundation, Inc.
California: Jennifer E. Martin, Lodi
Indiana: Leslie Clark, Shenandoah
New Hampshire: Elizabeth A. Latuch, Pinkerton Academy
Utah: Crystal Wootton, Wasatch

FOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Sponsored by H.J. Heinz Company; Seneca Foods Corporation; Meyocks & Priebe Advertising, Inc.
Arkansas: LeAnn N. Layman, Springdale
California: Molly A. Fagundes, Atwater
Connecticut: Bryan D. Harrison, Woodbury
Ohio: Adam M. Wilson, Laurel Oaks Career Development

Sam Harrel

FORAGE PRODUCTION
Sponsored by Gehl Company; Syngenta Seeds, Inc.
California: James Silva, Lodi
Indiana: Nathan Hedrick, Carroll
Oklahoma: Derek Shephard, Thomas-Fay-Custer
Wisconsin: Garrett A. Holewinski Pulaski

FOREST MANAGEMENT
Sponsored by DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund - Dodge Trucks; Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation; Timberjack, A John Deere Company
Alabama: Edd Willingham, Beulah
Georgia: Wesley Belcher, Morgan County
Kentucky: Raymond I. Dodd, Jr., Fulton County
Oklahoma: Max Clark, Mooreland

FRUIT AND/OR VEGETABLE PRODUCTION
Sponsored by Griffin L.L.C.; Briggs & Stratton Corporation Foundation, Inc.
California: Dean P. Vlazakis, Redwood-Visalia
New Jersey: Michael N. Brooks, Woodstown
Tennessee: Joseph Couch, Cherokee
Utah: Jared Zito, Bear River

GRAIN PRODUCTION - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
Illinois: Adam Bertolino, Nokomis
Kansas: Orrin Holle, Atwood
Minnesota: Joseph T. Schieffert, Sleepy Eye
Ohio: Reed Carey, East Clinton

GRAIN PRODUCTION - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
Illinois: Jason Ogden, Seneca
Indiana: Joel Goon, Warsaw
Kentucky: Robert L. Fenwick, Nelson County
Washington: Terry J. Keatts, Pomeroy

HOME AND/OR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Sponsored by Carhartt, Inc.
Minnesota: Jacqueline A. Bueckers, Staples Motley
South Dakota: Sandi J. Shape, McCook Central
Wisconsin: Paul Zirk, Royall
Wyoming: Travis Paulton, Saddle and Sirloin

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT
Sponsored by Bayer Corporatioin, Agricultural Division
Florida: John D. Curls, Suwannee Senior
Kentucky: Kenton Abrams, Oldham County
South Carolina: Rashad Pressley, Anderson District I and II
Virginia: Jared A. Fisher, George Wythe

NURSERY OPERATIONS
Sponsored by DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund - Dodge Trucks; National FFA Foundation, Inc.
Florida: Tavis L. Douglass, North Marion Senior
Iowa: Joel D. Strand, Emmetsburg
Kansas: Amy M. Brothers, Labette County
Tennessee: Melissa Burniston, Johnson County

OUTDOOR RECREATION
Sponsored by Chevy Trucks; Cabela's, Inc.; National FFA Foundation, Inc.
California: Holly Courtney, Nevada Union
Connecticut: Megan Fortier, Woodbury
Georgia: Merideth Bryans, Morgan County
Idaho: Paul Rose, Cambridge

POULTRY PRODUCTION
Sponsored by Wayne Farms LLC, Chore-Time Equipment Division of CTB Incorporated; United Soybean Board
Georgia: Matt Isbell, Franklin County
North Carolina: Robert Hinson, Piedmont
Pennsylvania: James Wright, West Snyder
Tennessee: Dustin D. Day, Bradley Central

SHEEP PRODUCTION
Sponsored by LA-CO All Weather Paintstik Markers; National FFA Foundation, Inc.
California: Beth Sequeira, Hanford
Indiana: Jonie R. Martin, Eastbrook
Texas: Zane Pittman, Sealy
Wisconsin: Ann M. Jarek, Bonduel

SMALL ANIMAL PRODUCTION AND CARE
Sponsored by Novartis Animal Health U.S., Inc., Iams
Missouri: Blake D. Mason, Hardin-Central
Ohio: Gina M. Rogers, Benjamin Logan
Oklahoma: Lacey D. Herbel, Thomas-Fay-Custer
Utah: Rachel Charles, Payson

Kelly Rogers

SPECIALTY ANIMAL PRODUCTION - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by National FFA Foundation, Inc.
Indiana: Adam Ingle, Lewis Cass
Tennessee: Patrick T. Robinson, Warren County
Texas: Hailey V. Jett, Shepherd
Wyoming: Sara Skalsky, Powell/Shoshone

SPECIALTY ANIMAL PRODUCTION - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by National FFA Foundation, Inc.
Arizona: Kyle Stokes, Chino Valley
California: Brian Sellman, North High-Bakersfield
Georgia: Jonathan Hardeman, Montgomery County
Iowa: Jill T. Tussey, Creston

SPECIALTY CROP PRODUCTION
Sponsored by Cerexagri; BASF
California: Joe Crump, Ridgeview-Bakersfield
Idaho: Matthew D. Beck, Burley
New Jersey: John Coombs, Woodstown
Oklahoma: Matt Stewart, Hennessey

SWINE PRODUCTION - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health
Indiana: Scott Morehouse, Fairfield
Oklahoma: Jeremy Brooks, Guthrie
Oregon: David Lorenzen, Dayton
Texas: Lacey D. Doughty, Stamford

SWINE PRODUCTION - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by Akey, Inc., Phibro Animal Health
California: Anthony Soares, Jr., Arroyo Grande
Kansas: Lance R. Visser, Riley County
Oklahoma: Daniel Mosburg, Thomas-Fay-Custer
Texas: Robert Early, Snyder

TURF GRASS MANAGEMENT
Sponsored by The Scotts Company; Bayer Corporation, Professional Care
Indiana: Adam Peters, Brownstown Central
Nebraska: Shawn C. Tordrup, Superior
Ohio: Justin Flegm, Fairbanks
Wisconsin: Ryan DeBuck, Delavan-Darien

WILDLIFE PRODUCTION AND MANAGEMENT - ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Sponsored by Bass Pro Shops, Inc.; National FFA Foundation, Inc.
California: Dustin Mancebo, Dos Palos
Connecticut: Ashley S. O'Dell, Woodbury
Oklahoma: Colbie Beyer, Chattanooga
Utah: Sid Throckmorton, Payson

WILDLIFE PRODUCTION AND MANAGEMENT - PLACEMENT
Sponsored by Cabela's, Inc.; National Rifle Association of America; The Lincoln Electric Company; Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Missouri: Kristopher A. Bodine, Hannibal
Nebraska: Dana Novacek, Cedar Rapids
Oklahoma: Jason Schnebel, Drummond
Texas: Nathan Roberson, Devine

ALABAMA: Nathan J. Blackwood, Douglas; Joseph B. Fike, Mount Hope; Josh L. Fulford, Hartford; Anthony Noel Goneke, McKenzie; Brian David Reeves, Enterprise; Jonathan Spruell, Lawrence County Center of Technology; Billy Sykes, Beulah; Jeremy Logan Taylor, Collinsville; Tremayne Dejuan Wilson, Billingsley

ARIZONA: Alicia Marie Boelts, Kofa; David Cody Carnahan, Peoria; Kirsten Compton, Casa Grande; J. Michael Gaspar, Yuma; Jamie Goble, Payson; Bethanne Smith Goodwin, Safford; Kodi Danielle Havins, Cibola; Bonnie Elizabeth Jones, Payson; Holly Lynn Mann, Westwood; Clint Nielsen, Peoria, David O'Brien, Chino Valley; Melinda Peterson, Willcox; Ryan Peterson, Antelope; Adam Prenovost,

Cindy Stucky

american FFA degree

Sponsored by BASF Corporation; Case IH; Farm Credit System Foundation; and Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

Fewer than one-half of one percent of FFA members attain the organization's highest honor and receive the golden key of the American FFA Degree. Members who attain this honor have invested many years into the achievement, with each earning their Greenhand, Chapter and State FFA Degrees to be eligible for the national award.

Recipients demonstrate growth in their supervised agricultural experience program (SAE), extreme leadership and community involvement. Degree recipients have set and achieved goals that will prepare them for their future careers.

Award winners who walked across the stage received the treasured golden key, a wallet card and a certificate. For many this was the last step in a long journey through FFA–one which saw them achieve much success.

Chino Valley; Heather Grace Marie Rothpletz, San Simon; Dean Rovey, Buckeye; Jonathan E. Rovey, Mingus Union; Kirsten Rovey, Peoria; Britney Elyce Schmidt, Flowing Wells; Mindi LeAnn Terry, Willcox; Jacob Michael Whetter, Millennium; Darby Melissa White, Kofa; Ryan Woehlecke, Coolidge

ARKANSAS: Chris Bacchus, Lamar; Amanda Britton, Searcy; Renee Durham, Prairie Grove; Joshua Guy King, Mountain Home; Jennifer Lewis, Mountain Home; Jessica Rose Lewis, Mountain Home; David Ryan Maloch, Emerson; Jay Mirus, Mountainburg; Jana Reynolds, Prairie Grove; Mindi Rowbotham, Mountain Home; Robyn C. Rowe-Lewis, Mountain Home; Will Schuhknecht, Mountain Home; Schad Stallings, Sloan-Hendrix; James D. Tilley, Mountain Home; Shannon Rene Tubbs, Weiner; Rex Mitchell Tullis, Mountain Home; Keith Warnock, Elkins; Rebecca Lynn Wherry, Camden-Fairview

CALIFORNIA: Jeff Abatti, Paso Robles; Moaz Ahmad, Woodland; Jessica Allen, Quartz Hill; Ruben M. Almada, Hilmar; Paul Amador, Modesto-Thomas Downey; Marcus Amarante, Gustine; Brannon Areias, Los Banos; Danny Aschwanden, Galt; Garland Austin, Atwater; Paula Avila, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Suzanne Baker, Atwater; Aby Balbuena, Lemoore; Nick Baldwin, Grass Valley-Nevada Union; Cassandra Barajas, Orland; Amanda Beals, Porterville; Jacob L. Bechtold, Apple Valley; David Keith Bergthold, Lodi; Andy Bettencourt, Turlock; Erik Bettencourt, Gonzales; Lori Biggs, Santa Maria-Righetti Kristin Elaine Blake, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Candace Blocker, Lompoc; Louie Borba, Hilmar; Jeanette Marie Borges, Tulare Western; Toni Bourez, Clovis; Meghan Bowen, North High-Bakersfield; Shannon Kristeen Branson, San Marcos; Sara Bruno, Lemoore; Andrea Buckley, Clovis; Lindsey Erin Bugbee, Fortuna; Candice Burrola, Atwater; Zeb Burroughs, Atwater; Dustin Bush, Hollister; Nicole Cadmus, Quartz Hill; Dario Camargo, Gonzales; Austin Campbell, Lompoc; Luke John Cardoza, Laton; Caren Carreiro, Lemoore; Carmelita Castaneda, Hanford; Fernando M. Cave, Visalia-Golden West; Christopher Jared Chaney, Kerman; Jake Chapman, Coalinga; Amy Clark, Elk Grove; Wendell J. Clement, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Cheyenne Click, Lake Isabella-Kern Valley; Christian Cloutier, Bloomington; Tyler Colburn, Visalia-Golden West; Thomas W. Collins, Clovis; Kimberly Coons, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Andrew Copen, Winterhaven; Linda E. Corella, Riverside-LaSierra; Victoria Costa, Tulare Union; Mary Da Rosa, Hollister; Randy Dahl, Coalinga; Chad O. Dale, Santa Maria-Righetti Kathrine Anne DeRose, Tulare Western; Nicole DeVol, Norco; Bryan Dias, Corcoran; Mason Garrett Douglass, Hamilton City; Dustin Espindula, Hilmar; Lauren Everett, Arroyo Grande; Jason Matthew Fagundes, Kingsburg; Molly Fagundes, Atwater; Jordan Fickett, Firebaugh; Jenny Filter, Sutter; Eric M. Finley, La Habra; Joshua Fint, Loyalton; Aaron Fisher, Santa Ynez; Neil Forbes, Lake Isabella-Kern Valley; Michelle

Forsythe, Mariposa; Justin Frye, Hanford; Sara L. Fuller, Lemoore; Ilany G. Garcia, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Melissa Garcia, Tulare Western; Scott Kelly Garcia, Campbell; Neil Gibson, Lucerne Valley; Whitney Gomes, Gustine; Daniel Gonzalez, Fresno-Pershing; Charlie R. Green, Middletown; Lauren Green, Santa Ynez; Jayme Greer, Sanger; Brenda Grijalva, Lompoc; Cecilia Guzman, Gonzales; Tracy Jean Haas, Elk Grove; Elizabeth Hageman, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Regi Lee Hall, Lodi; Tim Hammerich, Santa Rosa-Elsie Allen; Tracey Hansen, Firebaugh; Cassie Healy, Kerman; Caresse Danae Heitzman, Sierra-Tollhouse, Jonnalee Henderson, Arbuckle-Pierce; Mauricio Hernandez, Corcoran; Ben Hickerson, Sierra-Tollhouse; Bobby Hogue, Jr., Firebaugh; Crystal Horn, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Cindy Illingworth, San Luis Obispo; Joey Iribarren, Quartz Hill; Briana Elizabeth Jessen, Fresno-Central; Shawn Johnson, Chowchilla; George F. Jones, Coalinga; Jonathan Kane, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Mianna Kelly, Oakhurst-Yosemite; Kerri King, Lemoore; Sandie Kipe, Arroyo Grande; Shane Kirkland, Lompoc; Kyle M. Klimenko, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Austin Knisley, Riverside-La Sierra; Shawn C. Kreun, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Elizabeth Kuhns, Hollister; Heather Kunert, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Chris M. La Casse, Santa Maria; Theresa Laffranchini, Ripon; Christine Lancaster, Tulare Western; Mario Valentine Lango, Sierra-Tollhouse; Ignacio Larios, Corcoran; Colleen Ann Larmon, Lemoore; Leslie Leitch, Elk Grove; Ryan Joe Lewis, Laton; Kyle Ling, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Mark Losado, Dixon; Adam Loveridge, Loyalton; Jaime Magallon, Kerman; Brian Mancebo, Chowchilla; Luis Manzano, Jr., Fresno-Washington; John Markoudakis, Riverside-La Sierra; Joey Martin, Gustine; Norman Martin, Jr., Coalinga; Amber Martinazzi, Chowchilla; Theresa Martinez, Porterville; Blake McFann, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Tony Mejia, Fresno-Pershing; Dustin Mello, Laton; Tracy Mello, Hanford; Mathew Joseph Mendonca, Turlock; Bobbie Merrill, Ramona; Jenny Mesenhimer, Johansen-Modesto; Benjamin Michael Migliazzo, Atwater; Vincent Milasich, Fowler; Curtis Miller, Gonzales; Valentino Monge, Lemoore; Guadalupe C. Moreno, Brawley; Spring Mosier, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; John Murphy, Julian; Colleen Murray, Morgan Hill; Curtis M. Nagel, Visalia-Golden West; Michelle Nelson, Turlock; Ned Neumiller, Healdsburg; Austin Caine Neves, Nicolaus-East Nicolaus; Tim O'Connor, Porterville; Allie Oliveira, Hanford; Chris Oliveira, Atwater; Martin Oliveros, Newman; Randy Olson, Gridley; Justin Otero, Fresno-Washington; Douglas Paasch, Grass Valley-Bear River; John R. Palmer, Shandon; Donald Paradise, Coalinga; Cindy Parry, Salinas-North Salinas; Ryan Patterson, Grass Valley-Nevada Union; Shelene Petersen, Santa Ynez; Jaymee Phelps, Coalinga; Rachel Podsakoff, Kerman; Renee Prescott, Porterville; Heidi Ann Pretzer, Fresno-Central; Wm. Barry Putnam, Jr., Selma; Alejandro Ramirez, Gonzales; Jesus B. Ramirez, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; Patrick Ramirez, Firebaugh; Sammy J. Ramirez, Jr., Corcoran; Hase Rector, Hilmar; Nathan Chowchilla; Josh Signorelli, Lompoc; Ronnie Silva, Lemoore; Daniel Simas, Lemoore; Michael Lee Smith, Porterville-Monache; Raychel Smith, Lake Isabella-Kern Valley; Alfred Soares Jr., Chowchilla; Anthony L. Soares Jr. Arroyo Grande; Marcelo Soares, Lemoore; Michael Anthony Sozinho, Tulare Western; Janet M. Stanley, Mira Loma-Jurupa Valley; David Stephens, Corcoran; Davina Stevenson-White, Sacramento-Florin; Christine Stickles, Le Grand; Shawn Stretars, Elk Grove; Dustin Summers, Sanger; Janee' Thill, Campbell; Jessica Thomas, Hanford; Timothy Thomas, Hanford; Erin Kirsten Thompson, San Luis Obispo; Ryan Toledo, Porterville-Monache; Nina Trindade, Atwater; Catalina "Monique" Valdez, Kingsburg;

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COLORADO: Ashley Alise Absmeier, Alamosa; Katie Ellayne Appel, McClave; Erin B. Arnold, Weld Central; Amanda Baker,

Woodlin; Sam Beauchamp, Las Animas; Fallen Broughton, Rifle; Elizabeth Brown, Pueblo County; Zach A.Coryell, Burlington; Erin Daley, Rifle; Michael Duarte, Valley; Sean E. Ebright, McClave; Kale John Franz, Burlington; Benny Jay Frey, Holly; Skyler Gartin, Merino; Shiloh Gates, Soroco; Bryan Geisick, Wiggins; Lacey M. Green, Moffat County; Penney Guthrie, Rifle; Douglas Alan Hayes, Rifle; Robyn Herboldsheimer, Peetz; Crystal Jordan, Eaton; Jake Lightle, Burlington; Stacy Loutzenhiser, Flagler; Rylana Lydia Lundien, Burlington; Breanne Marrs, Fort Lupton; Christina Elizabeth Paintin, Kit Carson; Paige Pollard, Rifle; Amanda Provost, Pueblo County; Jeff Reck, Valley; Tyson Reents, Burlington; Jennifer Rossi, Fruita; Kari Lynn Sharp, Woodlin; Jake Smith, Las Animas; Janel Tagtmeyer, Hi-Plains; Lori Christine Thomas, Caliche; Ryan Thomas, Wiggins; Jessica Lynn Unruh, Cheyenne Wells; Dallas Edward Vaughn, Caliche; Carrie Waddle, Valley; Derek Wendt, Cheyenne Wells; Carla Wiedeman, Valley; Craig Wiedeman, Valley; Jeremy Wright, Valley

CONNECTICUT: Jennifer Lynn Barszcz, Lyman Hall; Kristen Bennett, Woodbury; Joshua Butler, Northwestern Regional; Gary Augustine Cimmino, Lyman Hall; Johanna E. Duffy, Northwestern Regional; Bridget Graham, Northwestern Regional; Theresa Hurd, Killingly; Rebecca M. Maclure, Lebanon Regional; Jeremy M. Moran, Southington; Amanda M. Morton, Woodbury; Jamie Morton, Woodbury; Scott Neurath, Killingly; Jennifer Plasky, Southington; Jenilee Shippee, Killingly; Heidi Stearns, Storrs Regional; Suzanne Sweeney, Northwestern Regional; Jacinda Mae Wintrow, Killingly

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FLORIDA: Willie P. Agner, Jr., Madison County; Frank Ray Allen II, Suwannee Senior; Thomas Kyle Anderson, Lake Butler Senior; Clayton Henry Archey, Bradford Senior; Amanda Barber, Cottondale Senior; Sara Christena Bender, Plant City Senior; Mitchell D. Bishop, Lake Butler Senior; Adam Chambliss, Malone; William Donald Dukes, Lake Butler Senior; Emily Michele Eckhardt, East Bay; Doug Fogg, South Lake Senior; Joshua Luke Fountain, Lake Region Senior; D J Hamm, Bell; Lauriel A. Hicks, Sneads; Catherine Lee Karchner, New Smyrna Beach Senior; Barrett Keene, Plant City Senior; Chris Kuharske, South Lake Senior; Kristin Kuharske, South Lake Senior; James C. LeFils, Jr., Pine Ridge; Chad McLeod, Suwannee Senior; Kathleen Montgomery, Lake Butler Senior; Cheston Perry, Lafayette Senior; Kelly Ann Polhill, Columbia Senior; Michelle Schenk, Bronson Senior; Kyle Shaw, Lafayette Senior; Christopher Wayde Shepherd, Plant City Senior; Gary Sisson, South Lake Senior; Clifford W. Starling, Suwannee Senior; Stefanie Tuggle, Sickles; Jarett S. Tyus, Sneads; Jillian Diana Weaver, New Smyrna Beach Senior; Jeffrey Marshall Willis, Columbia Senior; Kasandrea Worrell, Sickles Senior; Keely Zeller, New Smyrna Beach Middle

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IOWA: James Frederick Abbas, AGWSR; Jered Althoff, Starmont; Sean Becthold, Tipton; Erika Lynn Bilden, Valley; Amber Borcherding, St. Ansger; Aaron Brand, West Liberty; Benjamin R. Buttjer, Charles City; Luke J. Buttjer, Charles City; John Cannon, North Fayette; Michael Christiansen, Red Oak; John K. Clefisch, Tri-Star; Adam Cooper, Red Oak; Jessi Cross, Benton Community; Richard Crow, Tri-Star; Dan De Vries, Diamond Trail; Amanda J. Dight, Osage; Randy Dreher, Adair-Casey; Jessie Dugan, Charles City; Ryan Dunn, Linn-Mar; Jason Fagan, Cascade; Richard J. Faris, Mount Ayr; Brett Franzen, Fredericksburg; Carl D. Gerber, Hawkeye; Nicholas Gettler, Red Oak; Matt Gilliland, Mount Ayr; Mitchell Godes, DeWitt Central; Jeff Grimm, Montezuma; Nicki Karl Guenther, Charles City; Ross Hanig, Rockwell Sheffield; Kurt J. Hansen, Walnut; Ryan Head, Marengo; Caleb Hoakison, Creston; Dustin Wayne Crestwood; Justin Craig Van Houten, Sibley-Ocheyedan; Jaaron Walther, Tri-Star; Jesse Watters, Rockwell-Sheffield; Kelly Watters, Maquoketa; Jesse Wegner, Charles City; Valerie Weis, St. Ansgar; Brent William Wessel, Edgewood-Colesburg; Dennis White, Cascade; Amber Marie Wiebbecke, St. Ansgar; James L. Williams, North Mahaska; Katherine Kay Willie, West Delaware

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MAINE: Lucas Bradstreet, Mars Hill; Bradly J. Walsh, Mars Hill

MARYLAND: David Phillip Eaves, Walkersville; Matthew Vincent Koerner, Harford Technical

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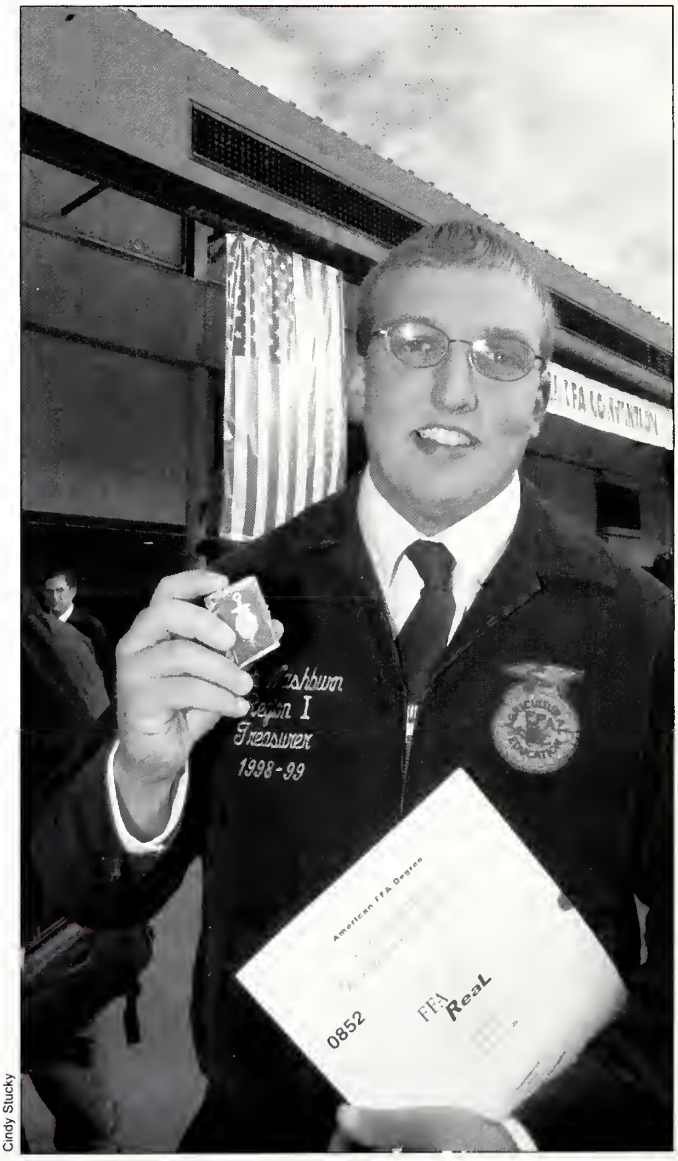

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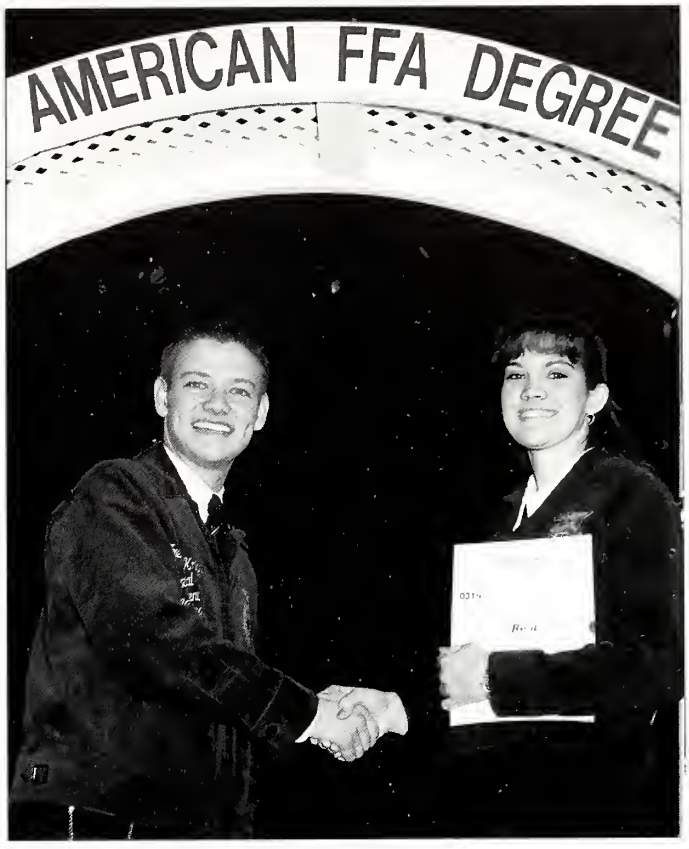

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This is Your Time

Trent McKnight, President
74th National FFA Convention
Tenth Convention Session

Some kids believe they are Power Rangers, some believe they are She-Ra, Princess of Power, and some believe they can fly just like…"it's a bird, it's a plane, no it's superman!" But, when I was a kid I believed I was the Incredible Hulk.

I realize I probably remind many of you of the Hulk, other than the obvious fact that I am not green. But with a body like mine, it's an easy mistake to make. Even to this day, I will stand in front of the mirror, every morning, with my shirt off, and flex. And every morning I am disappointed with what I see. So that belief was short lived.

Belief…So much power and so many different meanings behind such a common word! It's as simple as little kids believing they are superheros, but as complex as to make nations rise or nations fall. All world religions are based on faith and a belief in something. We believe in the candidate we are voting for to lead our country through times of despair.

It's amazing how something as simple as belief can give hope and change a life forever.

October 29, 1998. Freshman year. Oklahoma State University. The Fraternity of Phi Gamma Delta. I remember the night well. We were all busy awaiting the excitement of Homecoming the next day. People everywhere. Running over one another. Singing. Chanting. Shouting. Laughing. It was all there. The smiles on faces. The fear and tension lying in the questions "Is our house decoration good enough?" "Will we even complete it?" Time rolled on, and the minutes ticked a bit past ten. There was still much to be done, but the motivation began to dwindle.

Two graduate brothers walked in the house. Their eyes red, lips closed, and nothing around them seemed to exist. They started clearing everyone out, and the president asked all non-Phi Gams to leave while brothers and pledges stepped into the dining hall.

"This is just a pep rally," one guy said. But the solemn faces on the few told a different story.

Our president gathered everyone in and said, "There's been an accident." Immediately, everyone began looking around to see who was missing.

"Wade and Melissa were in a car wreck. Wade swerved to miss a deer." The stillness was chilling. "Melissa is fine, but Wade didn't make it." There was only a moment of silence, but to a group of college men, it seemed like an eternity.

Wade isn't gonna make it? What does that mean? What's he trying to say?

"Wade is dead. When he swerved to miss the deer he crashed and was thrown out the back window of his Jeep Cherokee."

This can't be happening. I'm 19 years old. We're in college. This stuff doesn't happen to us. We're invincible. Death is only an idea that we will never experience. What's going on? What is happening? God is this true? Is Wade gone?

One belligerent guy went on a rampage through the house, banging the wall, cursing, screaming, crying. Some brothers knelt to pray. Others just cried. A fraternity house and men are crying.

The funeral was held two days later in Tulsa. The church was packed. I remember Wade's mother giving the eulogy. You would think that two days after losing her son she would be a mess, but she wasn't. She had the biggest smile on her face I have ever seen a woman have. She had this radiant glow about her that filled the entire church. She was at peace.

About a week later I ran into her again at a friend's house, and she began telling us how she discovered this peace. She said Wade was a momma's boy and would always call home to check in. One day back in September she got a call from Wade.

He said, "Mom, I've got some good news and some bad news. What do you wanna hear first?"

"Awww, hit me with the bad news first," she said.

"Well mom, I skipped class today and went on a road trip with Bo."

"Ohhh, you saw Mark McGuire hit his 62nd home run didn't you?"

"Mom it was so awesome, we just woke up this morning and thought, 'what the heck'. But hey, I gotta go. Just wanted to call and let you know everything was OK. I love you, and I'll see you later."

Then, her eyes filled with tears, and she began telling about a dream she had just a few nights after the accident.

She dreamt Wade called her again. "Mom, I have some good news and some bad news. What do you wanna hear first?"

"Awww, hit me with the bad news first," she said.

"Well mom, I'm gone, and I won't see you for a long time."

"Ohhh, you've seen Jesus haven't you?"

"Oh mom, it is so awesome here. I can't even begin to describe what it's like. But hey, I gotta go. I just wanted to call and let you know that everything was OK. I love you, and I will see you again."

And with that, she woke up.

She was at peace because she had hope. She had hope because of her belief. She believed her son was in a better place. A belief so strong she knew her son was in a better place. Do you believe in something that strongly? A belief that leaves NO doubt in your mind of an alternative. Something that will give you hope.

Hope not in something of monetary or material value, but of something eternal. Love…God…Friends. Hope is really the only thing that will keep you going. Hope that will move the hearts of men. Hope stemming from a belief in a power or ideal greater than just yourself. Whether it is religious, patriotic or pride in an organization like the FFA.

Yet, it's what you do with that belief that will change the world. Where would we be today if those few but strong individuals had backed down? What if George Washington had submitted to King George? What if Abraham Lincoln really didn't believe he should preserve the greatest nation on earth? Or if The Reverend, Dr. Martin Luther King had said it really wasn't his place to stand up for his oppressed race? Or what if Mother Teresa would have allowed hunger and suffering to win-out over her Christian love?

They not only had belief, but a conviction to stand up for what they believed no matter what obstacle came their way. These are the men and women who wrote the history books. These are the men and women who formed the present. These are the men and women who shape the future.

Michael W. Smith wrote the song *This is Your Time* almost two years ago in memory of Cassie Bernall who was murdered at Columbine High School. She was asked a simple yes/no question from her tormentors. "Do you believe in God?" She paused, then answered yes. They asked her why, but before she had a chance to answer...

The song tells us to live every moment, leave nothing to chance. Swim in the sea, drink of the deep and embrace the mystery of all you can be. As you hear the music play, think of what it is you believe in so strongly that you will never back down.

This is your time to stand up for your beliefs.

This is your time to make something of your life.

This is your time to stand up for rural America and American Agriculture.

This is your time to unite with all Americans and tell the world we will NOT stand for terrorism.

This is your time to believe in yourself.

You have an entire life ahead of you. You don't know what will happen tomorrow. You don't know what will happen when you set foot outside this arena. Don't wait to live your life. Don't wait for good things to happen in the future. This is your life! Because THIS IS YOUR TIME!

Ed Zurga

Ed Zurga

Kelly Rogers

Dick Vitale, an ABC and ESPN college basketball analyst, spoke with great enthusiasm about his experiences of teaching and coaching. By having a passion and love for what you are doing, combined with a powerful work ethic and good decision-making, Vitale assured "It's Awesome, Baby!" success in life. Vitale's appearance was sponsored by the Gheens Foundation, Inc. as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

Wales Hunter

Bob Love, the second all-time leading scorer for the Chicago Bulls, spoke to FFA members about overcoming obstacles. "If you can dream, you can achieve!" said Love. Members were reminded that it takes 110 percent of your mind and body to be called champions. He shared encouraging tips on how to be successful. Love's appearance was sponsored by Fifth Third Bank of Kentucky as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

Ed Zurga

Suzie Humphreys, an actress and journalist, shared an inspirational message filled with humor, wit and stories of perseverance through adversity, motivating convention attendees to look for the best in all situations, even if it looks as if nothing good can come out of them. Humphreys' appearance was sponsored by Kroger of Kentucky as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

Ed Zurga

Anne Venemen, the first female U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, addressed Friday morning's session and talked about recent events in the country and what the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is doing to help.

Tomorrow Never Dies

Jennifer Edwards, Secretary
74th National FFA Convention
Third Convention Session

Stop! Stop! Stop! Stop thinking about tomorrow! When I was a young girl, I was always thinking about tomorrow. I never took time to learn from yesterday. Tomorrow was always one more chance to go for a ride on the Coosa River with my Dad, "Captain Skip", in his boat. I spent many sun-kissed Saturday and Sunday afternoons riding on the smooth water passing trees, banks of sand and friends swimming. Tomorrow also was another opportunity to ride the kneeboard. By always thinking about tomorrow's kneeboard ride, I missed the chance to learn from yesterday's outrageous jumps, the ski rope slipping out of my hands and the face-first crashes into the wake. I wanted to be a kneeboard master, but I never focused on developing the right skills, like how to quickly pull myself from the water, stay balanced as other boats zoomed by and building my biceps.

You know, when I think about it, kneeboarding is a lot like life. Whether we are students trying to make the grade, chapter FFA officers trying to plan the next meeting or athletes preparing for the game, often we get so excited about life that we only look toward the future. We don't look to our past for the answers to today's and tomorrow's questions. We don't focus on our priorities and strengths.

I want to help you pull yourself from the water and onto that kneeboard by discovering the value that can be found in your past experiences. Together we will focus on how you ride the kneeboard by analyzing what is important in life: priorities and building your strengths. Finally, I want to help you kneeboard off into the sunset by setting a future direction for your life.

Let's take a look at why we should all value our past experiences. Each individual has a foundation of knowledge based on experiences. We continue to build and add to our foundation by trying new things, growing ourselves and living life. This reminds me of trying to get onto the kneeboard. Now, this is by no means an easy task! Picture yourself bobbing up and down in the water behind the boat with your life jacket on, upper body resting on the kneeboard, and ski rope in hand. The motor starts up with a big whrrr… and then the boat takes off. You want to go forward behind the boat. However, the water is pulling against you. Before you can use your muscles to pull yourself up on that kneeboard, you must know where you are coming from.

I have great pride in where I come from, so it was an honor to speak at the Alabama FFA Convention. While there, I saw two of my greatest friends, Alyson Johnson and Devin Dotson elected to state office. I met Jonathan, from the Citronelle Blue chapter, who passed up an invitation to go bowling with his friends to come to my workshop. Gaston FFA had a pool party, and I maintained my standing record of never being dunked by them all! I shared in Matt Barton's excitement about a Dorset lamb he is showing this year. To top it all off, my mom and dad got to hear me speak at that convention.

Fortunately, my chapter, knowing how nice I am, gave me a ride to convention. Mr. Beasley, Simon and Pete picked me up that morning and we headed off to pick up Noah Frasier. I knew what to expect when I saw Noah. I hadn't seen him for a long time, but I knew he would have the same "aw shucks" grin and something to tease me about! This particular day, it was the famous FFA princess shirt he had seen me wearing in New Horizons. He teased me about wanting an autographed shirt to hang on his wall. After giving my keynote at the state convention he told me that he wanted to fall asleep during it, but he was afraid I would pull him from the audience as a volunteer for an activity. Now, it would not be fair for me to make you think I was an innocent victim of Noah's humor. One thing I am known for is my "Southern Sass," so sometimes I was asking for it! Especially when I would tease him about wearing "cowboy Wranglers." Noah was always quick to respond that his Wranglers were agricultural Wranglers because he was an agriculturalist.

I got ready to leave Alabama's convention on a Thursday afternoon. My next stop was the Arizona FFA Convention. To show that there were no hard feelings about our joking, Noah said, "You know Jennifer, I love you." I simply replied, "Noah, I love you, too." One day later, while I was in Arizona, Noah died in a car accident. The loss of such a remarkable individual is still hard for me to grasp. There are some people we cross paths with in life that we seem to share a special connection. For me, Noah was one of those people. He put other individuals before himself and possessed an incredible work ethic. I will always remember his passion for agriculture; one of the many things we had in common.

As a national officer, I have made many friends like Noah across the nation. Looking back, I believe that my desire to dutifully serve was so strong that it took precedence over my family and friends back home. I shifted my attention away from the people who were the first to influence me. I had lost sight of my friends and family at home, and it took the loss of a loved one for me to see that. When I lost Noah, I needed answers, a reason and comfort in my heart. To find those answers, I looked behind me. Looking back made me realize that certain things in my life, like family and friends, need more attention than my national office.

When I am trying to get up on this kneeboard, it's the same. I have to also know what is under and behind me. In order to know the water you have to understand the texture of it, the pull of the currents and the feel of the waves.

You have to respect the water, or you will crash in the waves. If you respect the water and possess an awareness of where you have been, the ride is easier.

The water is like those experiences under you and behind you, which is your past. Let's take a look at how we can learn from it. This is where it gets fun! Learning from our past is deeper than just reminiscing about a better time. Keep a journal of your experiences. Ask your family members to share stories of their life experiences and even stories of you when you were younger. If your childhood experiences are anything like mine, these will at least give you a good laugh! One of the components of our FFA mission is personal growth. Analyze your growth. Identify areas you can grow in, and set goals. Track significant events that have played a major role in shaping who you are. Learn about the heritage of America and FFA. Think of our FFA jacket. Our organization and members find value in the past; we have proudly worn this jacket since 1933.

Now that we all know to look back to our past, we can use it to help us get up on the board and out of the water. The next challenge is staying on that board for the ride!

I do not think you realize how hard it is to ride this board! You have to hang on. To stay on the board you need tremendous focus, and you have to know what to focus on. You need to place your greatest amount of focus on strapping the board to your knees and holding on to the ski rope! You have plenty of outside forces trying to knock you off of the board. For instance, the wake and waves from other boats, wind or even a little brother knee boarding with you is a crash waiting to happen!

They say, "If you chase two rabbits, both will escape." The same is true with focus. When we try to focus an equal amount of attention across all aspects of our lives we are not very efficient. To be an effective leader, focus efforts and energy on priorities in your life.

During my junior year in high school our class sponsored a beauty pageant to help pay for prom, so all the girls were encouraged to enter. Now I am not your typical pageant girl. I spent most of my free time showing sheep or on the basketball court.

All the girls in the pageant were really excited, except me. I would walk into a classroom and feel sick as girls were flipping through magazines trying to find the perfect dress. Listening to them was like hearing a bunch of chickens cackle, with the word "pageant" thrown in occasionally. Every tanning salon within a thirty-mile radius was booked solid with appointments by girls in search of the perfect, golden tan. You could always tell which girl was practicing her pageant walk when someone would trip in the school hallway. I pitied the poor guys in my class. Some girls thought the guys gave expert opinions on pageant hair and would hammer the guys with questions. As for me, I just pulled my

retiring address

prom dress from the year before from the closet and typed my application. I was not about to pay $20 to have my nails done, only to have one ripped off in a basketball game or while showing livestock.

The night of the pageant arrived, and the stage looked beautiful. I was worried about two large columns on each side of the stage. I just knew I would run into one with the spotlight blinding me. My goal was to keep from looking like a deer caught in headlights!

But I must have done something right that evening. I think it happened before the pageant. We had a round of interviews with the judges. The judges asked me three questions, "What are three words you would use to describe yourself?" Intelligent, determined and hardworking. "If you were an astronaut going into outer space, what would you take with you?" A photo album with pictures of my family. "What are your plans for the future?" To study agricultural economics at Auburn University.

While the other girls were worried about shining on the outside, I allowed my inside to shine. That night I must have done something right because I was crowned the Goddess of Gaston. I always knew I was a princess. Go ahead, laugh. It may be a silly title, but it took a special person to wear that crown. It took a person who has priorities in life and knows their strengths.

To develop your focus you must first identify your top priorities and strengths. Identifying your top priorities is as easy as answering the question, "What do I value most?" Your strengths are the ideas, talents and activities that you excel in. Think of strengths as things that you enjoy doing or get energy from. When there is a challenge with that enjoyment, you are growing your strengths. Hold yourself accountable by placing your priorities and strengths in a location where you can see them everyday.

When I was preparing for national office, I kept my strengths and priorities on an index card taped to my bathroom wall. That would be one place I would see them everyday! Now, I keep these in my daily planner. Where could you post your strengths and priorities to see them everyday? According to John Maxwell, a leadership expert and author, we should focus 70 percent of our time on our strengths. What percentage of your time do you spend focusing on your strengths? Focus on priorities and strengths and you are in control of your kneeboard.

We are now ready for the "Perfect Ride." The "Perfect Ride" is peak performance for knee boarding. We have already talked about the first two steps toward achieving peak performance. You have to be aware of what is under you, the water. We have to know where we come from and appreciate those valuable past experiences. Next, you have to focus on holding the ski rope, fastening the strap and balance. We have to cultivate a strong focus on our priorities and strengths. You are now ready to look ahead and set your direction. You are ready for peak performance, but what does it look like?

For me, my grandfather, Harry Boatfield, defines peak performance. My grandfather was a cotton and soybean farmer in Coates Bend. He seems to have a knack for survival. He served in World War II, has had open-heart surgery several times and has even been struck by lightening twice!

We used to grow watermelons, corn and sunflowers together. The watermelons we grew were my favorites, but only the red ones! I used to eat watermelon three times a day when I would stay with my grandfather and granny. When I woke up at sunrise every morning, before I learned to sleep in, I used to walk out into the garden in search of a watermelon. Finding a delicious looking one, I would roll it up into the yard under the maple tree. Scrounging up all of the muscle in my little biceps, I would pick it up above my head, and bust it on the ground. Now, if this particular melon happened to have orange or yellow meat, I would just leave it and walk away. The red melons were my favorites. Finally, along with Papa's help, we decided that I would let him pick my watermelons from now on. He seemed to have the magical ability to pick a red one every time! During my childhood days on his farm, I used to think that my grandfather was a rich man. He owned a lot of land, was continuously happy and seemed to do what he enjoyed every day. As I got older, I realized that he was not rich in a monetary way, but he did have all of life's riches.

He is the epitome of peak performance, the perfect ride. My papa uses his past experiences as a learning tool for himself and others. His examples were instrumental in developing my passion for the agricultural industry. First, he looks back to find the answers. Second, his focus is strong. He stays true to his priorities, his family and farming. With a sense of his past and a strong focus, he is able to successfully look to the future.

As you set a direction for the future, set goals for yourself that will determine where you are going and what you will become. Get involved with a career development event that will allow you to explore career opportunities in agriculture. Identify people in your life who model peak performance, those who have achieved the perfect ride. Create a road map of your dreams for the future, and hang it on your wall. My FFA advisor used to always ask, "Jennifer, where do you see yourself in five years, in ten years?" At the time I had no idea, so I dreaded this question. But, it turned out to be valuable because it made me look ahead and think about the direction in which I was headed. Ask yourself where you want to be in five years and ten years. Cultivate a concentration on your future.

Can you hear that? It sounds like a motor! That could only mean that it is time, time to think about your perfect ride!

The motor begins to purr, and before you know it you are using your muscles to pull yourself onto the kneeboard as Captain Skip kicks the boat into gear. Then, you are on the kneeboard getting yourself balanced.

Look around you, the coast is clear. You turn your concentration to holding the ski rope with your strongest hand, and you reach down with the other hand to pull the Velcro strap across your knees. It is a warm summer day, not too hot. You have been riding the board all afternoon, and now the sun is beginning to set on the horizon. The sky blazes and burns with dazzling oranges and pinks. The water is as smooth as a sheet of glass. There are no other boaters out playing, which means no wake to break your focus. No little brothers drowning you with the spray from another kneeboard.

You could not ask for anything more perfect. You are ready to look ahead, and truly enjoy the ride.

Are you ready for the perfect ride? Will you find value in your past experiences? Will you focus on your priorities and strengths? Will you then set your direction for the future?

Earlier, I told you to stop thinking about tomorrow. What I meant was, stop thinking about tomorrow long enough to prepare for it. You see, tomorrow never dies. Tomorrow will always be ready for you, the question is, will you be ready for tomorrow? Will you sink or reach your peak? FFA members, it all depends on what you do today! Then once you are ready, don't stop thinking about tomorrow! Don't you dare stop thinking about tomorrow!

Kelly Rogers

Lessons From an 8th Grade Nothing

Doug Kueker, Central Region Vice President
74th National FFA Convention
Ninth Convention Session

I remember walking up to the door of my eighth grade science room.

There she was, Kendra Burnette, all alone in the same seat I found her in before every class.

I wanted to recite my greeting to myself a couple more times before going in.

I cleared my throat, "Umm yes, well you see now that I'm an eighth grader I was hoping that maybe we could-"

Looking back, I now realize that practicing a pick up line, especially when you are going in to talk to your eighth grade science teacher, is a good sign that your romantic wishes have gone too far. I decided to get serious. I really hadn't come here to pick-up on her. I tried the opening again to myself. This time I checked for any unannounced squeaking that could happen, "Yeah, Mrs. Burnette, uh well, I kind of had some things on my mind. And well, I needed to, uh, talk!"

My mind was racing. This was my first time to ask advice from a teacher – not to mention one who I had a major crush on! Not only would I be a big nothing, but now I would be the only eighth grade nothing to ask advice from an "older babe," and I would probably get shot down! I tried to reassure myself. I was positive that she would be able to help me out.

I stumbled in the door and moved straight over to a desk near hers. She greeted me with, "Hey Doug Kueker, how was your day?"

The practice in the hall had paid off. I was impressed with my smooth eighth grade moves. The small talk was now out of the way. So I ever so suavely went straight into the conversation that I came here for. I plopped down in the seat and opened my mouth.

"B-duh, uh, well, uh, well, uh, Mrs. Burnette, I uh needed to talk about some stuff. Well, okay so I haven't felt like I'm in control of life lately. I had a hard time at basketball practice when the guys made fun of my athletic talent, or well, lack thereof. So then I got mad and threw a ball at someone's head. And, well, I missed–it hit the coach instead. So I spent my time running during practice. And, I also recently signed up for the cake decorating project in 4-H, but I dropped out because of this bully, Beau Giffen. He told me he should beat up a sissy like me. And, things at home have been kind of rough since Dad died two years ago. Mom's kind of lonely. Well, even yesterday, my sister and mom had an argument, and I couldn't stop them. I tried–I really tried. Now my family is just going down the tubes and it's all my fault! And well, uh, I don't want to be a sissy, I just thought that decorating cakes was an important life skill. Oh, Mrs. Burnette I feel like a big nothing!"

Mrs. Burnette looked into my pained eyes and said, "Do you have any power over how your basketball team acts towards you?"

"No." I answered.

She went on, "Do you control Beau Giffen or what he says?"

I saw her point. "No."

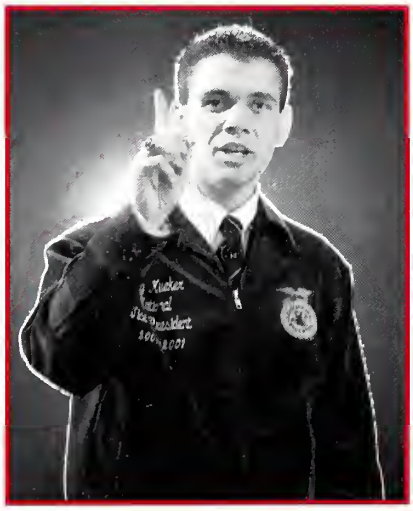
"Do you have control over your mom, your Dad's passing or your family?" She knew the answers.

I provided them. "No, no and no."

She continued. "But do you control your actions?"

There was no other answer but "yes."

She went on to share with me one of the most valuable pieces of advice I've ever heard.



Ed Zurga

She drew a circle on a sheet of paper and put a dot in the middle of it. She labeled the dot "you" and the circle around it "your circle of control."

She drew an even bigger circle around that and labeled it the "world." She said, "This is the world we live in. It includes every person we know, every situation we encounter, every thing that happens to us each day." She pointed to the inner circle labeled "your circle of control" and explained, "This circle of control includes everything you have complete power over." Sometimes life throws you a curveball, and if you spend your time reacting to the world around you, you can end up feeling like a big nothing.

We've all felt like that eighth grade nothing before. It's that feeling that we don't know our place in this world. We can have those feelings during those awkward years in junior high or when we are twenty years old. That's why there's power in knowing what you have control over in your life. There is a choice to make this next year. You can choose to be the one to live a life in your circle of control, or you can choose to live life reacting to the world around you.

Today I'll share with you a couple of lessons learned by this eighth grade nothing that might just lend some help once you've discovered your circle of control. You not only have to recognize the limits of your circle, but you should also find your box of confidence, put on some running shoes and move! It all starts from the inside out.

What is this box of confidence? It's that storehouse of confidence we all have tucked away within each of us. Once you find it, you have the key to standing strong in your circle of control. Another teacher in the eighth grade pointed out to me that the box of confidence we have is full of the standards by which we measure our ability. Come back to that time with me and see for yourself.

Before we go in, imagine the anxiety of walking into an eighth grade math class. For me, math class was a place of butterflies in the stomach, sweaty palms and shaky knees! Get the picture? Ok, now we're ready.

I can remember walking into class one day and looking to the back of the room to see Mrs. Ferguson at her desk. I made my way toward my desk, but she began the class before I could get there.

"Okay class," she squawked. I could tell by the tone in her voice what was coming up. "Let's review what we did on Friday," she continued.

Geez, a review! That meant one of two things a quiz or worse yet, board races! I needed to protect myself by getting to my desk-and quick. Her pointed voice boomed, "Doug, Michelle, Tara and Jake, since you're already up please go to the board!" I hadn't moved fast enough.

I started to think of a self-rescue plan. Maybe my leg will give out on the way up, a flood might come, or better yet, what if I mysteriously have to take a short bathroom break? My hand flew up as I reacted, "Uh, Mrs. Ferguson I have to go to the bathroom!" She said no! Now, I was fuming. She was onto my tricks. I was slow at math and I never won board races–so why should I even try? I didn't think it was okay to ask for any help either–that would be weak! I had convinced myself that I was in a race that I would never win. I reluctantly dragged myself to the board.

She began, "5,746 divided by 460." I growled under my breath. She had to start with long division didn't she? The chalk was already flying at the other three spots on the board. The cloud of dust was so thick, I remember the people in the front row making choking noises. The world was a bit different on my end of the board. I was just finishing putting the numbers up in my space. I was in complete slow motion. After two minutes I had one number down, five more to go. I hated board races. This time I didn't even finish the race. Man, did I ever feel like a big huge nothing.

Mrs. Ferguson came up to me at lunch that day. She said, "Doug, you know what you need?"

I replied, "A Calculator?"

She answered, "No, all you need is to find yourself a little box of confidence and stop measuring your ability in math by comparing yourself with the others in that board race."

Sometimes, in the race of life, we all choose to compare our ability to those around us. When we don't fill our box of confidence with standards that give us a chance to succeed, we most often fail to find our place in this world. Mrs. Ferguson opened up my box of confidence, helped me to dump out the wrong standards and start being stable in my circle of control by using the right standards.

What fills up your box? Maybe you feel the need to compare your ability in class, sports or FFA to others. Maybe you, too, judge your ability, wit or looks by what's popular, not what's right. Open up your box and sift through the standards by which you measure yourself. Dump out the ones that set you up to fail and replace them with more realistic standards. Did I do my absolute best? Did I live without regrets by putting in 100 percent effort? Did I live a life today that shows a clear purpose and direction?

Everyone will have different standards. We just have to determine what they will be. Invest the time today to identify two to three standards that are fair evaluations of your performance.

Filling that little box of confidence with the right standards can help us to stand solid in our circle of control. Once you're confident, though, you might just start to outgrow that circle you've been given. That's when it's time to put on those running shoes and move! That's the point in your life when you look around, make a decision and take a first step. Come back a few years with me.

On January 10, 1997, I looked around my life, determined I was going to take control of my physical health and literally put on some running shoes and started to move! I had surveyed the area around our house for the best places to start running. My goal was one mile. There weren't a lot of options, and the ones I had available were a little different than the normal quarter-mile track.

There was the half-mile track in the pasture out behind the house. That would definitely be a speedy program as I quickly learned to outrun the bull. Instead, the track I chose was one fifty-eighth of a mile. That's right - 58 times around the track equaled one mile. I started running in the basement of our home.

I put on my running shoes for the first time that day in January. I waddled down the cold concrete stairs into our basement. At five feet five inches and 250 pounds I was feeling pretty anxious for my first run! I surveyed the course. There were lots of obstacles: the pool table, the bunk beds, the hose from the dehumidifier, the house supports. I was going to come out of this new commitment with cat-like reflexes and the speed of a running deer. Actually, thinking realistically, I was going to be more like a big hippo that plowed through anything in my way.

I started running, or plodding, around the first few laps. That mile was a lot further than I thought. I continued to run, walk and jog. Running one/fifty-eighth of a mile at a time tends to make you feel a lot like one of those little gerbils on a spinning wheel. I even think that sometimes I could stop and the room would just continue spinning around me. I came to those last three laps of my first mile. During those last three laps, I started to hear a small, but clear voice inside me softly saying, "Yes I can!" I hadn't ever heard that voice before.

School was easy, being involved was easy, band was even easy. But sports, fitting in, being in control of my physical health–those weren't easy for Doug Kueker. What took thirty minutes that first night in 1997 now takes just seven minutes and forty-five seconds–a new personal victory. Ladies and gentlemen, there is power in awakening that voice inside your head that says, "Yes I can." Start something new!

We won't move forward to find our place in this world if we just stand still. At the point we start forming that one habit, we find other positive habits are soon to follow. Maybe your habit will be running, maybe it will be studying a subject you don't understand or maybe it will be spending an extra hour each week with your family. Identify one new habit for your life today and expand your circle of control.

It sounds so simple–asking you to recognize the limits of your circle of control. It seems like it shouldn't be that hard to just open up that box of confidence and sift through the standards by which we measure ourselves. It doesn't even seem possible that it could take much to put on some running shoes and expand our circle of control by forming one simple habit. But, it isn't that easy. Finding your place in this world can't be summed up in three short steps. These pieces just get us started.

The heart of finding your place in this world all comes back to a desk, a couple of circles and the greatest lesson I've ever learned. We move our lives forward from the inside of our circle out. That means it starts with you! FFA members, the bottom line is you have to challenge yourself to be the one. The one who searches to know yourself when others fear what they might find. The one who will stand strong when others cower. Finding your place relies on your commitment this year.

If you will commit to be the one who seeks to know more about you this next year rise out of your seat and stand right here, right now. Look around this auditorium at the people who have made the same commitment. Imagine the possibilities if everyone in here followed through on the commitment you've just made! It's time to go from feeling like that eighth grade "nothing" to boldly finding your place in this world.

A County Fair Kind of Life

Katy Poth, Eastern Region Vice President
74th National FFA Convention
Fifth Convention Session

I hate cleaning! It's just not my thing. So it shouldn't have been a surprise to anyone that I didn't particularly like cleaning the show box out after our county fair. Each year, after the fair was said and done, we'd hring the livestock home, put them in the barn, haul all of our dirty clothes into the house and dump them on the floor. Then we'd lift that big, heavy show box off of the truck. My dad would stare straight at my sisters and I and say, "Girls, Make sure you clean the show box out. Reorganize it, and get it ready for the next year. I want it to be spic-and span!"

Either my dad had an undeserved faith in my sisters and I or just a poor memory, but… we never did clean it out. In fact, we'd simply push that old show box into the barn, throw some stuff on top of it and hope he didn't open it to check. We'd walk back in the house, feeling smug and proud, knowing that we didn't have to think about the yucky chore of cleaning out the show box ever again—or so we'd convince ourselves.

However, there was one key element we were forgetting. If no one cleaned the showbox out, then next year it would probably still be dirty. But that was certainly not what was on my mind back then. When I thought about the county fair, cleaning out showboxes was certainly not the picture that came to my mind. I can only remember looking so forward to how fun the county fair would be. I would plan for months on end about what fair food I'd eat first (the French fries or the funnel cakes), what color ribbon I wanted to win in the livestock show (purple or blue), what friends I couldn't wait to see, how late my friends and I would stay up in our camper, what chores I could sneak my way out of and all of the fun I was sure to have on the Fairfield County Fairgrounds.

Our county fair, being the last in the great state of Ohio, is always held in the middle of October, right when the trees are gold and red and the air is crisp and cool. So when mid-October rolled around each year, I was sure ready for the fair. I can rememher one particular fall, when I seemed to be more excited than usual. This was the first year that I would get to show my very own hog. I could hardly wait! Until I saw my dad loading that show box onto the truck. I ran out to stop him—he obviously hadn't looked inside, or maybe he had cleaned it for me! As I ran up to the truck and carefully opened the old box, my suspicions were confirmed. The show box was as messy and disorganized as the way I had left it a year before. I was so angry and frustrated. Here I was, ready to head off to the fair and greet the fun that was anxiously awaiting mc, and now I had a mess on my hands.

But then, I started digging through it. I was amazed at the things I found. It was almost like a little time capsulc, perfectly preserved from the last fair. French fry cups, old ribbons, show tags, scattered decks of cards… the list could go on and on.

But here's the funny part—I didn't simply remembher eating the french fries that were left stale inside of that old cup. Instead, I remembered my cousin Jason and I chasing each other around thc beef barn with french fry cups in our hand. And I can't remember the specific show when I won this ribbon. I just remember my dad smiling as he proudly displayed the ribbon above my sheep pen. And the deck of cards? You guessed it. They weren't important to me either. But the memories of sitting on the show box in the early hours of the morning playing card games with my friends were.

It was as if everything I valued, everything wonderful ahout life, was contained in that little box. No wonder I loved the fair! No wonder I couldn't wait for the next year!

I had a life-changing experience that day I cleaned out the show box. I realized that this little box held all I needed for a joy-filled, unbelievable and wonderful life. The county fair week was golden for me. Nothing seemed to go wrong, and even when something did, it didn't seem like a big deal. I started to ask myself, "What if every week of my life was like the county fair?" If only those warm thoughts and feelings that I had during our county fair could somehow be bottled up and carried with me. Wouldn't it be incredible to live a county fair kind of life?

For me, the answer would be "Yes!" For you, that answer might not come so quickly. The county fair was my golden moment, my time when everything fell into place, and I felt like I could truly live! But you're not me. Each of us has moments in our life when everything seems to fall into place.

It's the time when you feel like you're on top of the world—when you can truly and honestly say that life is unbelievable. Finding your golden moment means knowing those things in your life that are made of joy, bring you joy and create more joy simply by being a part of your life.

But it's about more than joy and happiness. Your true golden moment is when you seem to be surrounded by everything that makes you—you. You're in your element, so to speak. Your values are in line with your actions, and your thoughts in line with your beliefs. No one even needs to question what your priorities are. What moments make this happen for you? Maybe you'd like to live a football-game-kind-of-life. Maybe you think a music-concert-kind-of-life would be the way to go. Or maybe you'd even desire to live a chemistry-experiment-kind-of-life. What is your golden moment?

We've all experienced moments in our life that we didn't want to end. It starts when we're young, and it includes a big man in a red suit. I'm talking about Santa Claus! When I was younger, the night before Christmas could never go by fast enough. To make things worse, we had a tradition at my house that we couldn't go downstairs and look at our presents until my parents came down too. I'd climb into my bed on Christmas Eve, close my eyes and pray for the hours to fly. At about 5:30 a.m., I'd burst into my parents' room, jump onto their bed, and ask them if I could go look under the tree yet. They would convince me that 5:30 didn't count as morning, so I'd walk back to my room to wait for what seemed like an eternity. Every five minutes, I'd leap out of my room, run across the hall, poke my head in their door and say, "Is it morning yet?!?"

Finally, they'd give in, and I'd go running down the stairs. I'd plop down right in front of my pile of presents, and wait for the opening-of-the-presents ritual to start. The entire morning was magical! It didn't even matter if Santa had left the presents I'd asked for. All I knew was that something special was in the air that morning.

As we grow older, somehow the magical feeling of those golden moments becomes harder to find. I was able to find it at my county fair. It was the sight of the fair lit up at night. It was warm apple cider in the morning, seeing friends that I only saw once a year and crawling out of our camper into the cold air at five o'clock in the morning to wash cattle. All of these things together gave me my golden moment. What is yours?

It's usually easy for us to say what makes us miserable. We hate getting made fun of in the lunchroom, bringing home bad grades on tests or report cards and having to go to school on a cold winter's day when we just know there should have been a snow day. But it's not always easy for us to say what makes us happy. In fact, the times when life seems like too much or not enough, the times when life seems downright horrible, are the times when we need our golden moments the most. And chances are, golden moments are right there, in the midst of all the trouble. We just don't always see them. There may even be golden moments right here at convention. It may be the feeling that overtakes you when the music comes on at the beginning of each session.

… Or it may be the lights that radiate all around the convention hall, so intensely that you know something amazing is about to happen.

… Or maybe you just feel pretty good right now.

Those are the moments to hold on to. Moments that fill you so full that nothing can ever drain your spirit. No negative comments. No put-downs. And no fears.

There was a point in my life when I really wasn't living my life with my golden moments in mind. I first noticed it at the

retiring address

beginning of my freshman year in college. To put it in my own terms, I just wasn't living a county-fair-kind-of-life. I felt tired, and I felt unhappy. It wasn't the same as high school, and I seemed so far removed from everything I had ever known. I envied those around me who seemed to have it all together. I was sick of feeling lost!

But that's when the change came. I began to see that while I was always looking to tomorrow for a better day, always planning for a bright future, I was missing the wonderful day that was right in front of me. I realized that if I could allow myself every day to appreciate life in the same way I cherished the county fair, then my life truly would be wonderful—even unbelievable.

I made signs. Lots of signs. They all said the exact same thing: "Today is the greatest day of my life."

I posted them in my binder, on my wall, on the mirror. I even put them on index cards in my pockets. I've even carried one in my FFA jacket all year long. Seeing that daily reminder was all I needed to live life the way I wanted to be living.

Some people don't need signs to remind them to appreciate life. Children are a great example of that. Having a mother who is a third grade teacher has always had its advantages. One of those is that I've gotten to know so many special eight-year-olds over the years. One in particular was named Caroline. Caroline had it all. Her father was a pilot, and her mother bought her everything she could ever want. Her mom would even make a pair of decorative socks to match every outfit she wore. If Caroline wore pink shorts, chances were that her socks were trimmed with pink ribbon and beads. She was cute, and she was popular. Much more popular and well-liked than little Stephanie who sat next to her.

Stephanie, by definition, was a misfit. She was the exact opposite of Caroline. Stephanie had nothing in a school district that had everything. While Caroline was always surrounded by a circle of friends at recess on the playground, Stephanie could usually be found sitting by herself, tracing circles with her feet in the gravel at the bottom of the swing set. Stephanie was known to come to school unclean and unprepared. On more than one occasion, cockroaches had crawled out of her little backpack in that third grade classroom. If ever two little girls were more different, certainly Caroline and Stephanie fit the bill.

One day, as the bell rang signaling all students to head out to the playground for recess, Caroline stayed behind a bit. She waited until the classroom was empty, and then she quietly walked over to a backpack and placed a wadded up sandwich bag inside. Quickly, Caroline turned and walked away, and the action was forgotten.

Later that day, Stephanie was carrying a wadded up sandwich bag with her everywhere that she went. My mother recognized it to be the same bag that Caroline had placed in a backpack earlier that day. She called Stephanie over to her desk and said, "Stephanie, do you mind if I ask what's in that little bag." A small smile crept onto her face as she said, "Mrs. Poth, Caroline and her mom made me a pair of socks." Then, with a proud, growing grin, one my mom had never before seen on her face, she pulled out a pair of socks, decorated with pink ribbons and beads.

The point of the story is not that Caroline went out of her way to brighten the day of someone in need, but that she did it with such a passion for life. Caroline loved life, and she was always able to find the parts of it that were good. She certainly knew what her golden moments were, and she lived life like everyday was one of those moments.

Caroline knew that the golden moments were not only about having fun, but instead about much more. She knew that those magical moments mean being aware of your faith, your integrity, your character and your conviction. This eight year-old girl understood that a golden moment is when you live your life with everything you value right where it belongs. The simplest things, like a football game, a county fair or even giving socks to someone in need can truly be the times when you realize that life is wonderful.

Bottle that magical feeling up, and use it as a guide for the rest of your life. The county fair was my moment, and you have yours. The difficult part comes in actually using it as a guide for your life. Strive to make every moment, of every day, of every week, of every year, feel just as wonderful. As soon as you commit to doing that, be ready, because the change it can cause in your life is, without a doubt, going to be incredible.

It took me a while to realize that to make my life really good, I had to look no further than my county fair. I'm proud to say that I live a county-fair-kind-of-life. While it may seem silly or trivial to you, to me this time was magic.

Here, you can see me as a 10 year-old girl, leading a sheep into a show ring. I can tell you that I probably placed last. But what you can't see is the sparkle in my eye because right at this very moment, life is good.

It doesn't matter what kind of life you decide to follow—that football-game-kind of life, a county-fair-kind-of-life or any other kind of life that truly follows your golden moments. But once you do—once you find what makes you happier than anything else in the world and you commit to live by that—you will see that life is incredible.

You know what your golden moments are, and you can make them a part of your daily life. So what's holding you back? Now is the time to begin. Now is the time to start valuing life and the beauty it holds. Life happens, whether you choose to be a part of it or not. You can sit back and wait for things to "really get good," or you can see how good they are now.

Yes, times will be tough. Yes, you will run into hardships, difficulties, trials, challenges, dilemmas, obstacles and moments of doubt, but that's no excuse to not take advantage of the terrific life that you are already living. Don't wait to enjoy life—to realize that life is already unbelievable! Don't wait until you finish school or start at a new school. Don't wait until you make the Varsity squad or finally win grand champion with your market steer. Don't wait until you gain 10 pounds or lose 10 pounds. Don't wait until Friday night or Sunday morning. Don't even wait until you leave this convention.

Nothing is certain except this: when the gavel taps and this session is over, you have a choice to make. You can decide to grab onto those golden moments and live each day with the same kind of energy and passion for life, or you can sit back and wait for life to come to you. And don't count on that to happen. Don't even count on having a second chance. Your chance to really start living the life that you deserve is here now. Once you embrace that belief, you will see that life is good, life is great, life is unbelievable!

Kelly Rogers

retiring address

Yes...I Believe!"

Ronnie Simmons, Southern Region Vice President
74th National FFA Convention
Fourth Convention Session

Faith. Faith in myself, faith in my friends, faith in others. Faith in God, my abilities and my work. Faith in my job, my health and my team. Faith that the sun will shine, the rain will fall, that the flowers will grow. Faith…it's the happening thing! It's the hottest thing on the market! It's the latest trend, the most popular fad. Its cool! Its hip! Its bad! Its more popular than cell phones or McDonald's french fries! It's taking the world by storm. It can be found in every home, in every town, in every nation. From the youngest to the oldest, from the richest to the poorest, everyone has faith.

Everyday we live by an understood faith. A faith that, for the most part, we don't even have to think about. Instead, over time we tend to forget about it and just hope that it happens. It is so easy to say that we have faith. In fact, in many cases it simply makes a great conversation piece. But what is it? How do you explain it? You can't see it, feel it or touch it. You can't smell it, hear it or buy it. Yet we all claim we have it. The question is not whether we have faith, but is it real faith… that faith that comes from the heart?

That can't happen until you make a purposeful effort to recognize and be aware of what you have faith in, and then embrace it. Faith is being able, without question, to say, "Yes…I believe!"

That, my friend, is faith of the heart!

In children, we find the most perfect examples of faith. They believe in themselves and that they can do anything. They have an open mind that is willing to grow. They are not even aware of corruption. Most importantly, they have no reason not to believe because they are born with that faith.

Here's what I mean. Ask a child what they want to be when they grow up. Very quickly, with conviction, they will respond with the answer, "a doctor," "a fireman," "a policeman." You may even hear "a pilot," "an astronaut" or "the president." They can say these things, without a doubt, because they have no reason not to believe. Ask a child who they trust and very likely you will hear, "my mom, dad, brother or sister." You may hear them say, "my teacher, friends, family or God." Why? Because in these, they find hope, friendship and belonging. It is in these that they first muster up the faith to say, "Yes…I believe!"

Travel back with me a few years. Picture a moment in your life when you were 100 percent content with your life. When there were no worries bigger than what you would put on your Christmas list or what toy you would get when you were shopping with mom. Maybe it was when you were in your bedroom, the land of make believe, playing peacefully with your toys spread across the floor. Maybe it was in your back yard playing hide and go seek with your neighborhood friends.

For me it was playing with my Hot Wheels cars and trucks in the dirt. I had 100 of my favorite cars, trucks and semis that I would scatter in the dirt below our house. I would be filthy, covered in dirt from my head to my toes. I had no problems, no cares and no distractions. In my make believe city there was no crime, violence, drugs or disasters. These things were unheard of. It was perfect, and I was happy!

In those moments the worst thing that I could imagine was for momma or daddy to come down the stairs and say, "lil' bit, it's time to wash up for dinner," or "lil' bit, it's time to get a bath." At the sound of those words, my little world would come crashing down. As a child, I didn't won't those playful moments to end. I had the faith to believe in the peace and security that my playful world had to offer. Back then, I still had the faith to say, "Yes…I believe"!

Ask a child about their dreams or goals and you'll usually get a quick and determined answer. Don't ask a child for their opinion if you really don't want it, because they value their beliefs and are not afraid to tell you about them.

This concept became real to me in March of this year. I had the wonderful opportunity to travel to our nation's capitol to be a part of the Ag Day celebration. While there, I worked with state FFA officers from Virginia and Maryland as we went into seven inner-city elementary schools to spread awareness of agriculture. Nearly one thousand third grade students inspired me that week, because they still had the faith to believe. As I visited those students, I would ask the question, "Does anyone know where milk comes from?" Without hesitation, nearly all the hands in the class would shoot up as the children screamed, "The grocery store!" When I asked the question, "Does anyone know where hamburgers come from?" Everyone shouted, "McDonald's!" To us those answers might seem funny or wrong, but to students who had never experienced otherwise, it was what they believed!

That's not even the whole story! What was going on outside the classroom painted a picture much different then their youthful exuberance. Driving from school to school I noticed beer bottles and trash littering the streets. Burned cars and debris in driveways. Boarded up doors and bullet holes in windows on the outside of homes. There were homeless people in tattered clothes on nearly every corner. Even close to the school, it wasn't much different. There was faded paint on the walls, bars over the windows and a security guard to greet us at the front door. I was shocked to walk inside the school and see that there were empty shelves with no books. But then, just when I thought I'd lost all my hope, I turned around to see the smiles and hear the laughter of young people who were living their lives, despite the world around them.

At the end of one class, something happened that will forever remain in my mind. We had just finished teaching the fundamentals of plant growth. Each of the students had a small plastic bag, which carried a wet sponge that was sprinkled with radish seeds that had been planted by the students. It was their souvenir to take home, to place in the sun and watch grow.

As you might imagine, some of the children didn't take these souvenirs as seriously as we might. While they were waiting to go home, some children were blowing up the bags and sitting on them like whoopee cushions. Others were slinging their bags from one side to the other having fun with their new toy! But for one young girl, the scene was much different. She sat there in her seat, in total silence, with a smile on her face, staring at her sponge and seeds. Quietly, I eased over to her and sat down beside her to ask what was on her mind. She looked at me and said, "I'm going to take it home and watch it grow!" She just knew that her plants would grow. She believed. It brought tears to my eyes to realize that, despite all the odds, those kids still had the faith to believe.

Unfortunately, I'm afraid that you and I have been robbed. I'm afraid that someone, somewhere, snuck into our lives and took away our childhood faith, making you and I the victims.

See for yourself. Simply turn on the evening news any day of the week. Very quickly you will see what I'm talking about. At least 90 percent of the news you see will be a fight, a murder or some other broken law. It may be in the form of terrorism, just as the recent attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Open your eyes a bit wider in the halls of your school when you get back home next week. You will more than likely see and hear it all: weapons, drugs, alcohol and profanity. So many students today have lost track of what they truly believe in. In many cases we have lost the courage to say, "Yes…I believe!"

Think about it! When we were younger, we didn't worry about what people might think of us and we didn't get scared at the thought of failure. We weren't worried about our appearance, and we didn't compare ourselves to others. We didn't require a certain haircut or name brand clothes. We weren't ashamed if our parents didn't drive a fancy car or if we didn't live in a mansion on a hill. Our lives were much simpler. But as we grow older, those things start to change. We realize that life presents us with so many options, and we have a choice to believe or not to believe.

In middle school, nearly all of my close friends were star little league baseball players! I decided that I had to play baseball too. I felt good because I knew some of the players. I felt even better because I knew the coach. Not only were he and my dad star players together in high school, he was also one of my dad's best friends. In practice Mr. Shirley would work hard to instill in me the desire to grow and the faith that I could do it. Because of this shared faith, I would swing the bat time after time, for base hits and even a few home runs. Day after day, I grew stronger, and practice after practice my baseball talents became bolder. But during the game, something was much different. My prowess in practice failed on the field. Clouded by self-doubt, I no longer felt that I was good enough.

Two full years of little league went by, and in spite of all of those great hits and wonderful catches in practice, not one time did this baseball player make a decent hit or a wonderful play in a game. I no longer had faith in myself to believe. I let a fear of failure stop me from sharing my talents with others.

It was a choice, and unfortunately, I gave up. I was no longer the person that I used to be. It was no one's fault but my own.

I couldn't stop there. Giving up on baseball created a huge void in my life. What was I going to do now? Could I ever regain the faith that I lost with the choice I made? Could my life ever be the same again? The answer was yes, because it was then that I first discovered the FFA. Through FFA, I began to rediscover my belief in myself.

Go out of your way to be the person that you used to be! The type of person that you were when you were bold and courageous, when nothing at all would have stopped you from believing. Many people ask how they could make a difference and change the world by believing and sharing their faith. The answer is one day, one moment and one person at a time.

For that very reason, September 11, 2001, marks a day that you and I will never forget. It marks a day that proved this world is not safe. It marks a day when thousands of lives were lost in an attack on our freedom. But September 11 also marks a day where mankind came together and shared with each other the faith to say, "Yes...we believe!"

I was very fortunate that week, because while many were at home watching this tragedy on television, I experienced something much different. I spent the week with you, FFA members, and never have I felt more inspired.

As I traveled in Missouri that week, I visited 24 schools, all of which paid tribute to those who had fallen. Some of the schools had assemblies and ceremonies. Some students asked questions and led discussions. FFA members across the country put up flags, raised money, held food drives and encouraged others to believe.

Despite the trembling economy and threat of war that week, I noticed a group of folks who didn't stop. They instead saw a definite need for their labor. As I was driving along the road, I was humbled at the sight of the American flag being flown proudly from the tractors of those who worked through their worry and sadness. You might know these folks as the American farmers. Our farmers had the faith to say, "Yes...we believe!"

I saw firefighters and rescue workers across this nation band together to make a difference. They inspired us with their work, and they brought tears to our eyes when they shared their belief in our country and in our resilience by raising a flag amidst the rubble of two fallen towers. They had the faith to say, "Yes...we believe!"

From a small town store front in Georgia, a little league field in California, a government building in our Capitol and dwelling places across our land, we see our nations' colors posted proudly. A symbol of a nation, a nation that believes.

That faith was further demonstrated as our president ordered a national day of prayer and remembrance. Cathedrals, churches and other places of worship were packed to capacity with people searching for an answer. Our National Cathedral was filled with people of all religions, suddenly united by faith. Once again, Americans young and old alike were sharing their faith with each other. From every corner of our nation thousands came together as individuals, but together we stood as one. Through patriotism, human kindness and the American way of life, we shared a faith that said, "Yes...we believe!"

This week, we have come together despite what others might suggest. Some people ask, "What's wrong with young people today?" Or, "Why are they doing the things they do?" They may say, "We didn't act like this when we were kids." Well, let me be the first to admit that we do make some mistakes and there may be a few things that we do that are wrong. But as I look around here this morning, I see thousands of precious gifts that prove we have done right. Each of those gifts are here wrapped in blue and gold. We are here because we have the faith to say, "Yes...we believe!"

FFA members, we have come to a time in our lives where we are faced with many choices. Not only do we have a choice to believe or not to believe, but we also have a choice to make a difference by sharing our beliefs with others.

Now is the time to commit yourself to something. Build on the beliefs that you value. But how can you do that? Maybe it is as simple as making a new friend this week during convention or offering a smile to someone you don't know. Maybe it is telling your advisor thanks for bringing you here or thanking your family for encouraging your success. Maybe it is going out of your way to talk to an outsider in the halls of your school or giving a hug to someone you love. Maybe it's having the faith to stand up and say no, when the world knocks on your door to seduce you with things that you know are wrong and harmful.

If you really want to challenge yourself and find your passion in helping others, get involved in community service. If you have a love for children and a willingness to serve, mentor a child. If you feel the need to help, hold out your hand to someone in need. But none-the-less, find your passion and commit yourself to something.

Reach deep down inside and find the courage to stand up for what you know is right. Don't give in and lose sight of the opportunity to share your faith with others. Don't wait for tomorrow, because tomorrow may never come. Instead, stand up right now, right this very moment, and say those three powerful words, "Yes...I believe!"

Ed Zurga

Turn The Page

Angela Browning, Western Region Vice President
74th National FFA Convention
Seventh Convention Session

January 21, 2001

Everything seems right as I sit here in Uptowner's Coffee Shop in Alexandria, Virginia, with my journal. I just finished a delicious muffin, and I'm working on a cup of green tea. I love listening to the man behind the counter. I would guess that he's in his forties. He smiles with the comfort and happiness of knowing almost everyone in this small coffee house, and I think, "Here is a man who loves his job." He was having a great conversation with one customer when I heard him pause and say, "Figure out what you are, and concentrate on doing that and doing it well.

"What a statement, and how true it is! So who am I? I am a Californian proud of my northern heritage and open to continually broadening my horizons. I love God and work to deepen my faith. I love being outside, I love coffee shops and I love thinking. I desire affection and praise from those I love, and I constantly seek to please them. I love animals and small children. I love music and the affect it has on my heart. I love knowing that I make a difference in others' lives. I wear khakis, jeans and love toe socks. Even more, I love flip flops and my shell necklace. I don't like arguments, but enjoy well-thought-out discussions. I love the feeling of taking a deep breath and exhaling all of the stress, anxiety and worries that somehow manage to creep in. I am me. I will concentrate on doing that and doing it well.

How those words bring back memories. I remember that day. I remember the clarity I had as I left the coffee shop that morning and the excitement I felt with my newfound quote: "Figure out what you are, and concentrate on doing that and doing it well."

I've kept a journal nearly every day since I was in junior high. Reading through these old books, I've realized so much about my life. You see, in eighth grade my best friend, Jacqui, passed away, but I still felt the need to tell her what was going on in my life. So I started writing her letters. Every night I would sit on my bed and write. As the weeks went on the pain began to ease, and I realized that I had found an incredible way to channel my emotions. My journals have been an important part of my life ever since. They tell the story I wasn't always confident to tell. Figuring out just who I am and being happy about it is something I've struggled with for years, but I'm beginning to realize the significance of it in each of our lives. It's time to turn the page to a new day where we are passionate about who we are and we live our lives accordingly. To do this we must ask ourselves three questions. What are my passions? Am I proud of me? And do my passions guide my actions every day?

It starts with the question, "What are my passions?" Inside each of you is an amazing gift. You each have different talents. You've been told that all your life, but have you ever stopped to think about what drives those talents? What makes you good at something? It's that passion inside of you.

Growing up I loved to dance.

Three days a week my mom took me to dance class where I learned jazz, ballet and tap.

We would practice our pleas and pirouettes, and I even dreamed of being able to dance en pointe.

Each day I would return home and practice at the dance bar my dad had put up in my room. Like most young dancers at the time, my favorite movie was Flash Dance, and I would watch it several times a week. Of course, as an aspiring dancer, there was certain preparation I had to do before I could watch.

I would get out my leotard, leg warmers, and of course, my headband and wristbands. I was definitely an eighties child!

I would sneak into my parents' room where the medicine cabinet was, and I would search for a roll of medical tape. As I turned the movie on, I would sit in the middle of our living room and wrap my feet in tape, just like the star of the show. And then that famous scene would come on. I would jump up, push my hair back, look straight ahead and run in place as fast as I could. Sometimes I would even wear my dance outfit when I wasn't dancing, just because I loved it so much.

My parents were thrilled when I discovered that this stunt came in especially handy during business get-togethers at our house, family parties and any time a guest was over. I would somehow appear during the middle of the evening, dressed to the hilt in one of my mom's old dresses, and would casually practice my stretches and leg lifts in the middle of all our company.

But you know, I was never a very good dancer. I never learned to dance en pointe and never had the leading role in our recitals, but I loved to dance. Out there on that dance floor I was living out a dream in my mind.

That was one of the greatest feelings. What are your dreams? What gets you so fired up about life that you feel on top of the world? For me, it is dancing and music. It is working with people to help them grow and being involved in agriculture.

Each of us here has within us a burning desire for agriculture and this organization, but we have our individual interests too. Your passions are those things that you would do for the rest of your life even if you didn't get paid. Some passions you have all your life. Others catch you off guard and tug profusely at your heart to do something you've never done before. Don't let them pass you by.

For you, it may be working on cars, speaking or driving the biggest piece of farm equipment you can get your hands on. Too often, we try to narrow down and categorize our passions. "I'm a sports player" or "I am a musician." "I can't be both." But I believe you can. It's time to find your passions and start following them.

Knowing your passions gives you the power to answer the second question, "Am I proud of me?" One of the hardest challenges we face in life is comparing ourselves to others.

Wales Hunter

retiring address

We feel the need to constantly measure ourselves against those around us. Sometimes even our passions fall into this trap. We feel that we must be good at what everyone else is good at and try to fit a certain mold. We worry through life. Am I good enough? Am I smart enough? Am I doing everything I should be doing? To a certain extent this is beneficial, but when it begins to control our lives we have to step back and decide what is truly important to us. What gives us happiness?

At one point in high school, the only thing stopping me from being happy was me.

March 4, 1996

Mom is worried about me because I stress too much, so I'm trying not to let it show. Why can't I be happy with all of the gifts and talents I have?

November 17, 1996

Lately, I've been going through this self-esteem roller coaster. One day I'll be totally happy and feeling great about myself, and the next day I feel horrible. It is really weird. Sometimes I feel like crying because I'm fat and ugly. I hope I grow out of this.

One year ago I stood on this stage, awestruck, amazed and speechless. We were whisked backstage and into a new world, but I will never forget one of the first lessons I learned. Sitting outside the Executive West Hotel, Sunday October 29, 2000, our national officer advisor, Mr. Stump gave us this simple advice, "Until you stop comparing, you will never grow." He shared this with us as we embarked on our year as officers, warning us not to compare our strengths and performances. As I stand here tonight, I can't begin to tell you how often those words have replayed in my mind.

FFA members, it's time to be happy. Your passions can't be compared. Whatever it is that gives you that feeling inside and gets you excited about life cannot be measured. Your passions, your happiness, don't have to be good enough for anyone else. They just have to be good enough for you.

That means that if most people at your school love public speaking, but you enjoy welding, then by golly spend more time in that welding booth. If you are captivated by the science of genetic engineering, and no one else in your class is, it doesn't matter. You like it, and that's what matters. Larry Banks, a Paralympic Gold Medallist in the 100-meter dash, once said, "There will always be people who will tell you that your dreams are too big, your hopes too unattainable. Ignore them."

When you know who you are and you can say "Yes" I'm proud of me, it is time to answer the final question. "Do my passions guide my actions every day?" I would venture to say that most people in today's society don't live by their passions. Their fast paced lives and lists of things to do make it seem like there isn't time to do what they love. Well I say, "Enough!" Enough frustration and dissatisfaction with life. Enough going through the motions. It's time to start living from our heart.

What happens when we don't live from our heart? This year I faced a challenge like I've never faced before. It was midway through the year and our schedule was pretty busy, and I found that I had lost touch with many of my passions.

March 3, 2001

This week I took a look at my days: wake up, check e-mail, breakfast, meetings, dinner, thank you notes, phone calls, sleep. I feel like I've let a part of me go these two weeks, a part of my priorities. I haven't exercised because I've been too tired. I haven't written in my journal, and I haven't even read my bible. I have worried too much. It's time to make a change. I pray that this week I would remember me in all that I do. Me who loves public speaking, who loves agriculture and who has a support base back home bigger than I could ever ask for.

I had become so busy that I had buried those passions in my heart that make me smile. I had stopped singing in the shower. I hadn't played outside. I had pushed my passions aside. No wonder I'd been feeling drained! I'll be the first to admit, it's easy to do. It is easy to neglect our passions because we see them as time-wasters or impractical. It is time to reevaluate our priorities! Take time to do those things that you love, for they are what make you who you are. I love how Joan Lunden puts it: "Following your passions gives your life purpose, vigor, vitality and friends."

You make the choice. Just because it's Monday doesn't mean it has to be bad. Wake up 10 minutes early so you can learn a new rif on your guitar or read a book you planned to get to someday.

I've decided I'd love to be a clown. Not a carnival clown, but a party or a circus clown. Go ahead, laugh. I have the courage to say my dreams out loud. How many of you can retaliate with a dream like that? A dream that gives you complete happiness? You all can. I know you can because I've seen it in you this year. I've met members who have taken the extra step, who are letting passions drive their dreams.

May 22, 2001

It is hard to believe that tonight is my last night in Maine. Tonight, Chad picked me up, and we drove out to see Jeff. He was still cutting potato seed at 10 pm! It is incredible to see the hours he puts in working with his family. That feeling of being a part of such a prideful, close-knit industry is amazing. I see it in his eyes when he tells me about the acres of potatoes he grows. I hear it in his voice when he proudly shares the stories of his family's history in agriculture. It's in the way he carries himself with a sense of confidence that cannot be moved. I've never seen passion like this.

June 1, 2001

This evening I sat backstage at Kansas' convention talking to one of the state officers, Orrin. As he told me about his experiences, a voice in my head shouted, "This is what FFA is all about!" Its about a boy who aspired to be a rancher and in sixth grade bought his first cow. Who started renting land from his father to farm in eighth grade and who last year had a $90,000 income with his crops and cattle. Who would farm every day even if he never got paid just because he loves it, but who is going to school to ensure that he can make a living out of his passion. That is FFA!

Ladies and gentleman, it's as simple as this, it is time to start doing those things we enjoy. No more excuses. Live out those dreams in your heart. Allow them to guide your decisions. Maybe it is learning sign language, traveling to Mexico or studying historical preservation. Don't ignore them. Passions breathe life into the words we write every day about ourselves. Do what it takes to honestly say, "I know who I am," "I'm proud of me" and "My life is directed by my passions." Following our passions is what makes us happy.

I look back through the pages of my journal and am amazed at how much one morning in a coffee shop taught me. "Figure out what you are, and concentrate on doing that and doing it well." What will the next page in your life say? Will it be filled with "have to's" and "I should haves" or will it come to life with stories of how you lived your passion every day? How you didn't care what other people thought? How you felt that calling in your heart and this time you followed it? Turn the page and write the story your heart has been telling. Let your passion guide you.

national chapter awards

Sponsored by Cargill and Land O' Lakes
as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

The National Chapter Award program recognizes FFA chapters who actively use a Program of Activities (POA) that emphasizes student, chapter and community development. These activities and projects provide citizenship, personal growth and leadership development opportunities to students, and minimum requirements for recognition have been developed in each area. Top chapters nationwide compete for three Models of Innovation awards and middle school chapters compete to be named Outstanding Middle School. Students from the winning chapters received plaques in an onstage ceremony.

NATIONAL WINNER
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
Clinton Central FFA Chapter, Indiana

Travel figured prominently in the activities of the Clinton Central FFA Chapter. Along with other chapters and state officers, seven members participated in the Indiana FFA Leadership Academy, touring agricultural businesses in France and Germany. On the domestic front, nine Clinton Central Greenhands traveled to California where, as guests of the Atascadero FFA chapter, they toured progressive dairies, viewed marine mammal migrations and forged friendships with their west coast hosts. While in Indiana, the chapter made more than $2,000 sponsoring two separate livestock shows.

NATIONAL WINNER
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

Repeat finalist Perrydale FFA Chapter embraced generational diversity by partnering with a local retirement village to encourage a "Senior Citizen Connection." During three visits to the village, members sang, brought gifts and even served a holiday luncheon to 65 residents. In their county conservation district, Perrydale members planted 600 trees. They also collected and distributed 10,000 articles of clothing and more than five tons of food to organizations assisting those in need.

NATIONAL WINNER
CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT
East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

The East Clinton FFA Chapter took a hands-on approach to chapter development. With assistance from alumni and the community, members helped landscape a city park by building birdhouses, park benches and flowerbeds. Next, members developed a school wetland and nature area, where they used their building skills and released butterflies they hatched and raised. East Clinton members also hosted an eighth-grade leadership night to provide upcoming freshman with information about FFA opportunities.

OUTSTANDING MIDDLE SCHOOL
Worth County Middle School FFA Chapter, Georgia

When tornadoes struck a nearby community, members of the Worth County Middle School FFA Chapter quickly came to the aid of their neighbors, collecting boxes of canned goods and cleaning products and helping load a semi to transport the emergency supplies. Members raised nearly $8,000 to finance their chapter activities and local livestock shows. In addition, 25 Worth County members served as peer mentors to train and supervise special needs students working in their greenhouse, increasing plant production by 30 percent in the process.

THREE STAR

FLORIDA: Pine Ridge Sr.
GEORGIA: Jackson County High
ILLINOIS: Barry, Cissna Park, Greenville, Mt. Carroll, Mt. Vernon, Newark, Olney, Prairie Central, Seneca, Somonauk - Leland, Valmeyer
INDIANA: Adams Central, Carroll at Flora, Clinton Central, Heritage, North Montgomery, North Newton, Shenandoah, Switzerland County, Tri-County, Western Boone Woodlan
IOWA: Benton Community, Creston, Harlan, Monticello, Tri-Star, Wapsie Valley
KANSAS: Arkansas City, Chapman, Holton
KENTUCKY: Apollo, Central Hardin, Jessamine County, Meade County, Spencer County
MICHIGAN: Corunna, Marshall, Montague
MINNESOTA: Battle Lake, Forest Lake, Perham, United South Central, Zumbrota Mazeppa
MISSOURI: Aurora, Carthage, Troy
NEBRASKA: Franklin, Imperial, Norris, Ravenna, Seward, Syracuse
NEW JERSEY: Allentown
NORTH CAROLINA: Piedmont, South Rowan
OHIO: Bowling Green, East Clinton, Greenville, Indian Valley, Miami Trace, Otsego, Preble Shawnee, Versailles
OKLAHOMA: Alva, Chickasha
OREGON: Perrydale
PENNSYLVANIA: Conococheague, Middleburg, Spud Growers, Twin Valley, West Snyder
SOUTH CAROLINA: Aiken
SOUTH DAKOTA: Elkton, Garretson, McCook Central
TENNESSEE: Dyersburg, East Robertson, Munford, Portland
TEXAS: Bowie-Austin, Humble, Quanah
VIRGINIA: Central, Nelson
WASHINGTON: Evergreen, Ritzville, Yelm, Zillah
WEST VIRGINIA: Ripley
WISCONSIN: Beaver Dam, Bloomer, Cochrane - Fountain City, Granton, Lodi, Prairie Farm, Spencer, Stevens Point, Waupaca, Waupun, Weyauwega - Fremont

TWO STAR

ALABAMA: Enterprise, Eufaula, Fort Payne
ARIZONA: Antelope
ARKANSAS: Flippin, Mountain Home Jr., Searcy
CALIFORNIA: Crescent City-Del Norte, Dinuba, Fresno-Central, Imperial, La Puente Valley ROP, Norco, Quartz Hill
COLORADO: Eaton, Flagler, Hoehne, McClave, Pueblo County, Springfield, Valley, Weld Central, Wray
CONNECTICUT: Housatonic Valley Regional, Lyman Hall, Mattabeset
DELAWARE: Smyrna, Sussex Central
FLORIDA: Baker County Sr., Ft. White Middle, Ft. White Sr., Heritage Middle, Marianna Sr., New Smyrna Middle, Orlando Colonial Sr., Ponce de Leon Sr., Suwannee Jr/Sr., Suwannee Middle, Trenton Jr., Trenton Sr.
GEORGIA: Bainbridge High, Colquitt County, Hutto Middle, Jeff Davis Middle, Oconee County High, Perry High, Worth County Middle
HAWAII: Leilehua (James Dole)
IDAHO: Cambridge, Kuna, Meridian
ILLINOIS: Amboy, Blue Ridge, Bluford, Bushnell - Prairie City, CHSAS, Cisne, Cumberland, Eastland, Forreston, Franklin Center, Marissa, Paxton - Buckley - Loda, Payson, Southeastern, Sullivan, Tri-Valley, Unity, Warsaw
INDIANA: Benton Central, Carroll at Ft. Wayne, Indian Creek, Oak Hill, Reitz, South Adams, Southmont
IOWA: Agri-Power, Cascade, Charles City, Estherville, Hawkeye, Indianola, Marengo, Mid-Prairie, North Fayette, Prairie Valley, Rockwell-Sheffield, Sibley-Ocheyedan, Sioux Center, St. Ansgar, West Marshall
KANSAS: Abilene, Atwood, Clay Center, Hill City, Jetmore, Linn, Marysville, Norton, Solomon, Stockton, Washington, Wellington
KENTUCKY: McLean County, Nelson County, Oldham County, Scott County
LOUISIANA: Hathaway, Rayne
MARYLAND: Caroline, Clear Spring
MICHIGAN: Allegan County Tech & Ed, Branch Area Career Center, Lapeer County Vo-tech, Lowell, Sanilac, St. Louis, Unionville-Sebewaing

MINNESOTA: Alden Conger, Benson, Blue Earth Area, Brainerd, Buffalo Lake Hector, Chaska, Menahga, Randolph, Stillwater, Tracy, Upsala, Watertown Mayer, Waterville Elysian Morristown, Winona

MISSISSIPPI: Carthage, Neshoba Central

MISSOURI: Bowling Green, Cameron, Centralia, Clopton, Dadeville, East Newton, El Dorado Springs, Eldon, Gallatin, Glasgow, Logan-Rogersville, Marionville, Milan, Monroe City, Mount Vernon, Neosho, Nevada, North Shelby, Salisbury, Sarcoxie, South Shelby, Strafford, Sweet Springs, Union, Worth County

MONTANA: Cascade, Clark's Fork, Conrad, Flathead, Park, Richey, Shields Valley

NEBRASKA: Blue Hill, Freeman, Fullerton, Norfolk, Pender, Stuart, Sutton

NEVADA: Ruby Mountain, Silver Sage

NEW JERSEY: Penns Grove, Woodstown

NEW MEXICO: Animas, Mesa Vista, Moriarty

NORTH CAROLINA: Eastern Randolph, Forest Hills, Purnell Swett, Randleman, Sun Valley, Union, West Carteret

NORTH DAKOTA: Garrison, Lisbon, Napoleon, Rugby

OHIO: Amanda Clearcreek, Ansonia, Blanchester, Cardington-Lincoln, Clyde, Delphos, Elmwood, Hardin-Northern, Hillsboro, Lynchburg-Clay, Margaretta, Miami East, National Trail, New Bremen, Pettisville, River Valley, River View, Talawanda, Tri-Village, Twin Valley South, Wauseon, West Muskingum, Westfall

OKLAHOMA: Adair, Altus, Arnett, Bethel, Broken Arrow, Cashion, Central High, Claremore, Cleveland, Coyle, Cushing, Davenport, Dover, Drummond, Durant, Elgin, Elk City, Freedom, Glencoe, Guthrie, Indianola, Kingfisher, Madill, Mooreland, Morris, Roland, Sapulpa, Stillwater, Strother, Tecumseh, Tipton, Tuttle, Waynoka, Woodland

PENNSYLVANIA: Berlin Brothersvalley, Cedar Crest, Cloister, Cumberland Valley, Grassland, Greenwood, Lancaster Mennonite, Selinsgrove

SOUTH CAROLINA: Belton Honea Path, Central, Edisto, Latta, McBee, Wagener - Salley

SOUTH DAKOTA: Bridgewater, Harrisburg, West Central, Woonsocket

TENNESSEE: Anderson County, Bradley Central, Cherokee, Jefferson County, Johnson County, Lexington, McMinn County, North Knox, Peabody, Powell Valley, Riverside, White House

TEXAS: A&M Consolidated, Anderson-Shiro, Brownsboro, Calallen, Cedar Park, Childress, Clear Brook, Clear Creek, Columbus, Crosby, East Central, Grandview, Hamshire-Fannett, Hartley, James Madison, Katy, Kingwood, Klein Forest, Krum, Livingston, Mansfield, Navasota, Normangee, Northwest, Rockdale, Sanger, Snyder, Tomball, Weimar

UTAH: Bear River, Grantsville, Lone Peak, North Summit, Sky View, Wasatch

VERMONT: Central Vermont

VIRGINIA: Atlee, Buffalo Gap, Culpeper High School, Fort Defiance, Laurel Park, Park View Middle, Randolph - Henry, Sherando, Signal Knob, Stonewall Jackson, Strasburg, Turner Ashby

WASHINGTON: Cathlamet, Colton, Elma, Franklin Pierce, Goldendale, Grandview, Rochester, Sumner, Wenatchee, Winlock

WEST VIRGINIA: Jefferson, Ravenswood, Roane County, St. Marys, Wirt County

WISCONSIN: Ashland, Big Foot, Chippewa Falls, Clear Lake, Colby, Denmark, East Troy, Janesville Craig, Marathon, Marshall, Mauston, Mishicot, New Holstein, Oconto Falls, Randolph - Crambria - Freisland

WYOMING: Pine Bluffs

Kelly Rogers

Dr. Larry Case, national FFA advisor, extends a handshake and congratulations to members representing the South Rowan FFA Chapter from North Carolina. This chapter was one of the hundreds recognized for their accomplishments and efforts through the National Chapter Award program.

ONE STAR

ARIZONA: Peoria, Yuma.

CALIFORNIA: Eureka, Lompoc, Riverside-Norte Vista

FLORIDA: Bradford Sr., Santa Fe Sr., Sarasota Sr.

KENTUCKY: Breckinridge County, Caldwell County, Lyon County, Wolfe County

LOUISIANA: Beau Chene, Lacassine, Louisiana School of Ag Sciences, Mt. Hermon, Oak Grove, Ponchatoula, Ruston, Walker

MAINE: Presque Isle

NORTH CAROLINA: Barlett Yancey, North Iredell, North Lenior, Princeton, West Craven

NORTH DAKOTA: Divide County, Finley/Sharon

TEXAS: Arlington, Bandera, Bryan, Caney Creek, East Chambers, Fairfield, Iola, Jacksboro, Jones-Coldspring, Lewisville, McGregor, McKinney, Mexia, Nacogdoches, Pilot Point, Sinton, Texline, The Woodlands, Tidehaven

WYOMING: Buffalo Bill, Lyman

Kelly Rogers

Members representing the East Clinton FFA Chapter from Ohio were thrilled to learn their chapter was the Model of Innovation winner in the chapter development category. This award recognizes chapters who build a strong program of activities (POA) designed to encourage the FFA chapter to provide opportunities and services to its members.

national chapter awards

100% states

Four outstanding states were recognized for having 100% FFA membership for students enrolled in agricultural education. California, Colorado, Ohio and Oklahoma were recognized with the honor during a convention session. These states have worked hard to actively involve all of their members in FFA.

By working to improve classroom education, providing diverse FFA activities and increasing the importance of supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs), these states are on the cutting edge of agricultural education. Congratulations to the California, Colorado, Ohio and Oklahoma members and advisors, as well as to chapters across the country who are encouraging others in their state to strive for this goal.

States with 100% membership include:

California
Colorado
Ohio
Oklahoma

States with increases in FFA membership include:

Alaska
Connecticut
Delaware
Georgia
Idaho
Illinois
Kansas
Kentucky
Maine
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
North Dakota
Pennsylvania
Puerto Rico
Rhode Island
South Carolina
South Dakota
Texas
Vermont
Virginia
Virgin Islands
Washington

Kelly Rogers

A member from the Missouri FFA Association happily accepts recognition on behalf of her state for achieving 100 percent membership.

VIP citations

Ed Zurga

Individuals providing exemplary service to the National FFA Organization were honored with VIP Citations at the 74th National FFA Convention

Wilbur H. Palmer of Alvirne High School in New Hampshire has been teaching agriculture for forty years. Under his leadership, the agriculture program has experienced truly amazing success. Enrollment has grown from 34 students to 400. Palmer's incredible determination led to the building of a first-class, $6 million vocational center. The National Academy of Science recognized the Alvirne High School agriculture program as one of five model schools in the United States.

Dr. Richard Rogers recently retired from California State University-Fresno, where he devoted himself to the advancement of agricultural education. For 24 years, Rogers trained and supervised over 200 agriculture teachers. His many accomplishments include helping to develop the California state agriculture curriculum, directing the state Agriscience Fair program and creating a $1 million scholarship program assisting fifth-year student teachers.

R. W. "Bud" Porter of Moline, Illinois, retired in 1999 after 35 years of outstanding success as an employee of John Deere. His most recent position at the corporation was as senior vice president of North American agricultural marketing. Throughout his career, Porter strengthened the impact made by FFA. In 2000, he served as chairman of the National FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board. While chairman, Porter helped to secure funding for the FFA Technology Project, in addition to $7.6 million to support FFA programs and agricultural education.

Charles Arensmeier of Okemos, Michigan, taught agriculture for seven years in Missouri. He then moved to his current home state of Michigan to serve as project coordinator at the Michigan State FFA Association. As coordinator, he managed all operations including the state officers, career development events, conferences and conventions. Arensmeier lead the restructuring of the association, served on the development team for the Michigan FFA Foundation and helped to develop the Michigan Agriscience Curriculum Project.

Gary Smith of Peoria, Illinois, served for five years as the State FFA Executive Secretary in Oklahoma. While serving as executive secretary, Smith implemented a tremendous public relations plan, including weekly radio shows to promote FFA programs throughout the state. Since purchasing Venard Films, Smith has developed high-quality presentations at the lowest cost possible, featuring numerous FFA programs. Smith embodies the true spirit of FFA by giving extra effort in each endeavor.

Harold B. Van Cleave of Warrensburg, Missouri, mentored and supervised agricultural education student teachers for 18 years. As an agriculture teacher, he helped hundreds of students realize their potential. The strong leadership skills developed through his program were evidenced through a long list of awards earned by his students and the election of five state FFA officers from his chapter. As an advisor, Van Cleave guided his chapter to winning nine state and national gold emblem awards. He helped to ensure the future of agricultural education as a professor at Central Missouri State University.

F. Richard Beard from Utah State University has worked to enhance the field of agricultural engineering for 23 years. Beard was a leader in the development of the new systems format for agricultural mechanics programs. This new format is now used in high schools and universities throughout the United States, as well as in the National FFA Agricultural Mechanics CDE. A contest judge for hundreds of events and a participant in state officer training for three different states, Beard truly continues to help FFA come alive for all members.

Dr. Adam J. Sponaugle from Hurricane, West Virginia, recently retired as state superintendent and director for the West Virginia State FFA Association. His unshakable commitment to agricultural education and the FFA made possible funding in excess of $2 million for program modernization and new initiatives. Keeping close ties with the everyday realities of FFA, Sponaulge regularly participates in FFA activities and has been a strong voice in efforts to lobby support for agricultural education in Washington, D.C.

Ed Zurga

Gary Smith was all smiles as he received his plaque from Jennifer Edwards.

honorary FFA degrees - FFA supporters

Honorary American FFA Degrees are awarded to those who advance agricultural education and the FFA through outstanding personal commitment. The presentation of degrees was made during an onstage ceremony at the 74th National FFA Convention.

The National FFA Organization works to enhance the lives of youth through agricultural education. Without the efforts of highly dedicated people, thousands of students would not be able to reach their fullest potential through membership in FFA. The Honorary American FFA Degree is an opportunity to recognize those who have gone beyond the valuable daily contributions to make an extraordinary long-term difference in the lives of youth. All received a certificate and medal.

Jim Davis

The Honorary FFA Degree program is designed to honor individuals who have rendered outstanding service to FFA. Mary Felumlee was thrilled to receive this recognition.

honorary FFA degrees

ALABAMA: W.H. "Buzz" Sierke

ARIZONA: Billye Foster, Harold Kirchner, Monica K. Pastor

ARKANSAS: Robert J. Griswold, James T. Tollett

CALIFORNIA: Art Boster, Phillip Brown, Brad Dodson, Larry Dutto, Ron Nishinaka, Kimberly Ann Perry

CONNECTICUT: Errol Terrell

DELAWARE: William F. Kirk

FLORIDA: Robert Gornto, Richard Joyner, Carl B. Loop

GEORGIA: Cindy W. Greene, William J. Lott, Cliff Ratliff, Robert F. Ray, David Richardson

ILLINOIS: Larry H. Hageman, John Edward Hatzer, Barbara H. Valerious, Glenn Webb

INDIANA: Mark Balschweid, David L. Doerfert, Dean R. Folkers, B. Allen Talbert

IOWA: Norman Borlaug, Jerry Hillard, Dolores Mertz, Frederick C. Parrish, Eldon C. Weber

KANSAS: Jerry Hardy

KENTUCKY: Jennifer Barnett, Clark Bertloff, Sue Calvert, Sam Crawford, Jenny Dunavan, Linda Edwards, Michael N. Harreld, Doris Sims

LOUISIANA: Mark A. Breaux

MASSACHUSETTS: William L. Thuemmel

MICHIGAN: Carolyn Bloodworth, Kim Sumerix

MINNESOTA: Ronald F. Eustice, Eugene Hugoson, Alan Hunter, Alan E. Krysan, Douglas E. Punke, Tom Rothman, Dallas Sams

MISSISSIPPI: James Richard Bowers

MISSOURI: Lynn Henderson, Dennis Plummer

NEBRASKA: Dean A. Glock, Diane D. Knutson

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Richard L. Barker

NEW JERSEY: William Brooks, Susan R. Butch, Michael Iannitelli

NEW MEXICO: Saundra Grimshaw-Castillo, Rudy Tarpley, Jim Whitlock

NEW YORK: Zina Lawrence, Tim O'Leary, Carl H. Staib, Henry Staib, Sherri Staib

NORTH CAROLINA: James L. Oblinger, Larry Wooten

NORTH DAKOTA: Al Gustin, Roger Johnson

OHIO: Wesley E. Budke, Mary Felumlee, Jerry Layman, James C. Papritan, Rick L. Utz William D. Waidelich

OKLAHOMA: Dennis Howard, Celeste Nelson, Linda Shackelford, Clifford Smith, Les Tilley

OREGON: Pamela L. Gilmore, Merle Linegar

PENNSYLVANIA: Bill Campbell, Nancy Campbell, Willie Sole

SOUTH CAROLINA: Richard Brunson Ward, Jerry D. Holley, Kenneth W. Lake, Ronald P. Townsend

TENNESSEE: Timothy W. Chowning, David Macius, John W. Rose

TEXAS: Dwayne Pavelock

VIRGINIA: Francis F. Knott

WASHINGTON D.C.: Ron Castaldi

WEST VIRGINIA: Joe Casto, Gene Fisher

WISCONSIN: James Dassow, Barb Lee

WYOMING: Ed Stratman, Janice Stratman, Tom D. Whitson

honorary american FFA degree - agriculture teacher

ARIZONA: Mike Gillispie, Peoria High School

CALIFORNIA: Ron Arington, Sonora Union High School; Marc Coleman, Hilmar High School; Kenneth Godfrey, La Sierra High School; Jim Isbell, Etna High School; Steven Sampietro, Golden West High School; Heidi Vietor, Ukiah High School; Don Wolford, Shasta District Farm; Robert Young, Santa Paula High School

GEORGIA: Danny Brooks, Habersham County High School; Trifonio I. Papel, Dodge County High School; Mike Tanner, Coffee County High School

IDAHO: Larry Judd, Lapwai High School; Milton W. Osgood, Middleton High School

ILLINOIS: Larry Eimer, Illini Central High School; David Simms, Pope County High School

IOWA: Alan R. Sorensen, Walnut Community Schools; Eric Trager, Audubon High School

MICHIGAN: Marvin Palmer Daglow, Cassopolis High School

MINNESOTA: Eric J. Deters, Stewartville High School

MISSOURI: William T. Halleran, Dallas County R-1; Robert L. Yearsley, Dallas County R-1

MONTANA: Pete J. Rising, Culbertson High School

NEBRASKA: Joseph A. Baldassare, Mead High School; Marc Wittstruck, Crete Jr/Sr High School

NEW HAMPSHIRE: William Johns, Dover High School Regional Vocational Center

NEW MEXICO: Steve Bouvet, Hatch Valley High School

NORTH CAROLINA: Jerry R. Jones, Greene Central High School

NEW DAKOTA: Allen D. Giese, Wahpeton High School

OKLAHOMA: Joe Scifres Roff High School; John W. Stricklin, Strother Public School; Ernie Walker, Hinton Public Schools

OREGON: Les Linegar, Ontario High School

PENNSYLVANIA: Virgil E. Gutshall, Newport School District; Martin C. Heyler, Cowanesque Valley High School

SOUTH CAROLINA: W. Frank Sandifer, Floyd D. Johnson Technology Center

SOUTH DAKOTA: James Chilson, Florence School #14-1

TEXAS: Tom Brockman, Kress High School; R. W. Claxton, Bland High School; David Frazier, Snyder High School; David Kempen, Somerset High School; Robert Washington, Yoakum High School

VIRGINIA: Darla L. Miller, S. G. Stewart Middle School; Ronald B. Roller, Strasburg High School

WISCONSIN: Gordon Gasch, Brillion High School; Cal Geiger, Mayville High School; Todd Kohlhepp, Fall Creek High School

WYOMING: Tony Anson, Riverside High School

honorary FFA degrees

parents of national officers

California: Cindy & Tom Browning

Alahama: Mary & William Edwards

Missouri: Shirley Kueker

Texas: Billie & Ross McKnight

Ohio: Kathy & Ted Poth

Florida: Jana & Ronnie Simmons

parents of STAR finalists

Star in Agrihusiness

Michigan: Barbara & Peter Sweeney

Missouri: Paula & Jim Thies

North Dakota: Sandy & Maurus Brossart

Wisconsin: Cheryl & Tom Skelly

Star in Agricultural Placement

California: Estella & Luis Manzano

Illinois: Julie & Kent Flesner

Missouri: Sharon & Allen Lockard

South Dakota: Karen & Dan Streff

Star in Agriscience

California: Terri & Paul Lancaster

Florida: Robin & Michael Dukes

Kansas: Grace & Michael Bowser

Wisconsin: Gladys & Philip Offer

Star Farmer

Kansas: Vickie & Jerry Friess

Kentucky: Ann & T.C. Sanderfur

Oklahoma: Debbie & Jim Kahoe

Wisconsin: Beth & Jeff Hahn

retiring national FFA board of directors, trustees and consultants

Jim Allsup

Tommy Gladden

Lawrence Gundrum

David Howell

Vickie Lantz

Sue Poland

Ricky Sellers

Sarah Osborn Welty

PALS, can hunger & agricultural ambassadors

Jim D'Angelo

The Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS) conference, during national convention, brought local elementary students to the fairgrounds to participate in a variety of fun activities.

Kelly Rogers

FFA members visited with elementary school students to educate them about the importance of agriculture.

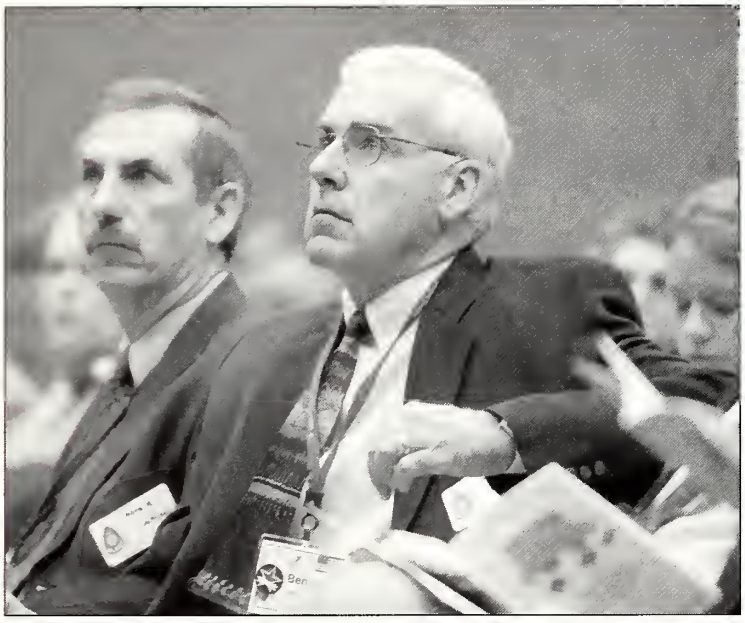
American popular culture dictates that the guest should always be courteous and helpful to the host. FFA members know how to do this better than any others and practiced it in Louisville. Community service programs organized during the national FFA convention connected the Louisville area with the heart and programs of the FFA.

The Project Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS) conference brought 500 elementary students to KFEC to be "siblings for a day." Most of the little pals were unfamiliar with agriculture and FFA, but after fun-filled hours they became educated and aware of the big picture of agriculture.

Kentucky Harvest was trying to collect a million pounds of food for shelters and missions in one month. Their campaign, titled "A Million in a Month," saw the help of FFA members push them well beyond their original goal 15 days before their deadline.

Before convention even began, state officers were visiting area schools teaching fifth grade students about the importance of agriculture as part of the agricultural ambassador program. State officers were able to encourage students–with or without an agricultural background–to join FFA and benefit from the leadership opportunities.

alumni



Travis Doster

Hundreds of FFA supporters attended the National FFA Alumni Convention to support the organization, conduct business and educate others about the importance of local alumni chapters.

national FFA alumni

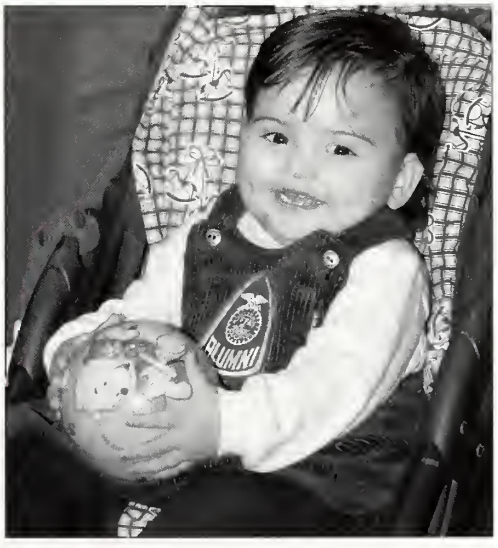
It takes special people to support the FFA. Across the country, thousands of alumni members give their time and resources to support local chapters and state associations. To celebrate accomplishments and plan for the future, FFA supporters converge in Louisville each year for the National FFA Alumni Convention.

The National FFA Alumni Association plays an active role by sponsoring leadership conferences and scholarships for students and the National FFA Alumni State Leaders Conference for alumni members. In addition, the association sponsors workshops for students and advisors during the national FFA convention. JD Cant, Oregon; Michael Clark, Pennsylvania; and Chris Vitelli, Florida; presented a workshop entitled "When's, Why's and How's of Starting an Alumni Affiliate" to students and advisors, sharing the secrets of alumni success and how to charter an affiliate chapter.

At this year's convention, more than 800 items were auctioned during silent and live auctions, with the big-ticket item being a 2002 Chevy Avalanche. Other items included a Sundowner Prostock MP Trailer, a one-year lease on a New Holland Boomer Compact Tractor and many others. Members also went to the 2nd Annual Alumni Night at Joe Huber's Family Farm & Restaurant to enjoy a relaxing evening and a wonderful home-cooked meal.

Sam Harrel

Over 800 items were auctioned this year during the alumni's live and silent auctions, with the 2002 Chevy Avalanche the big ticket item.



Travis Doster

This little girl has her eyes set on being a supporter of FFA and agricultural education someday!

foundation sponsors

distinguished service citations

The National FFA Organization presented the Distinguished Service Citation to two companies who have spent years providing outstanding service and opportunities to FFA members and agricultural education students.

Representatives from Monsanto Company, DeKalb, Ill., and John Deere, Moline, Ill., accepted the honor on behalf of their organizations during an onstage ceremony held at the 74th National FFA Convention.

A 47-year partner of the National FFA Organization, Monsanto has long helped FFA members realize their dreams through agricultural education. Over the years, the corporation has given more that $4 million to support FFA programs and agricultural education. This year, in addition to its regular annual contributions, the company made a $100,000 contribution to help find a solution to the shortage of agriculture teachers.

John Deere has been a partner of the National FFA Organization for 58 years. One example of John Deere's commitment occurred last year when the FFA emblem was displayed on the hood of the company-sponsored Winston Cup car during NASCAR's Coca Cola 600 in Charlotte, N.C. The publicity from this unique opportunity greatly added to more than a half-century of the corporation's generous financial support of the FFA.

The Distinguished Service Citation is the highest award presented to an organization, agency, business or other group by the National FFA Organization. A limited number of citations are presented annually at the national FFA convention. The purpose of the award is to recognize outstanding contributions made to agricultural education and FFA programs.

Ed Zurga

Representatives of John Deere and Monsanto were pleased to receive the Distinguished Service Citations on behalf of their respective companies.

For the 35th consecutive year, the National FFA Foundation set a record level of support raised for FFA and agricultural education programs. At the 74th National FFA Convention, 2001 FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board Chairman Lawrence J. Gundrum announced that the foundation had raised a total of $8,003,188 in 2001 to support annual projects and programs for FFA and agricultural education—an all-time record.

Since 1944, the National FFA Foundation, through the support of its generous corporate and individual donors, has raised more than $107 million to develop curriculum, fund programs and recognize FFA members with awards and scholarships.

Wales Hunter

Doug DeVries, Senior Vice President, Deere & Company, presented 2001 Sponsor Board Chair Lawrence Gundrum and 2002 Chair-Elect Jim Borel with a check for $200,000 for the Project "Accessing Information Management" (Project AIM), a three-year initiative to bring state-of-the-art technology to FFA .

2001 retiring sponsors' board

Chuck Berger,
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, The Scotts Company

Gary Flickinger,
Retired Vice President Manufacturing/Engineering, Dean Foods Company

Jerry L. Hardy,
Assistant Vice President-Kansas City Service Region, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation

Michael N. Harreld,
Regional President, PNC Bank

Lynn O. Henderson,
President & Chief Executive Officer, Doane Agricultural Services Company

Jerry Hillard,
Officer - Farmowners/Ag Strategy, Farmland Mutual Insurance Company/Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Company

Diane D. Knutson,
Vice President & General Manager-Agricultural Products, Union Pacific Railroad Company

Karen J. Pedersen,
Retired Vice President & Director of Human Resources, Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.

Dennis Plummer,
Chief of Staff to the Chief Executive Officer, Monsanto Company

R. W. "Bud" Porter,
Retired Senior Vice President, North American Agricultural Marketing, Deere & Company

John C. Rabby,
Group Vice President North America, BASF

Bruce A. Scherr, Ph.D
President & Chief Executive Officer, Sparks Companies, Inc.

executive council

2002 Chairman
James C. Borel, President, DuPont Crop Protection, DuPont Company

2003 Chairman-Elect

Christopher M. Cashman, Global Director, New Product Development, Pfizer Animal Health

Past Chairman (2001)
Larry J. Gundrum, Senior Vice President, Operations, Kraft Foods, Inc.

2001 sponsors' board

Dwight Armstrong, Ph.D., President and Chief Operating Officer, North American Nutrition Companies, Inc.
Emmett Barker, President, Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM)
Mike Blair, Ph.D., Director, Technical Services and New Product Development, Aventis Animal Nutrition
Gerald W. Brase, Senior Vice President-Merchandising and Marketing, Tractor Supply Company
Joseph P. Burke, Vice President, Customer Business Development, Coca-Cola Enterprises, Inc.
Kathy Cornett, Chairman, McCormick Advertising Company
Tom Davis, Publisher, Successful Farming
Douglas C. DeVries, Senior Vice President, Worldwide Marketing, Deere & Company
Max A. Fisher, Vice President, Public Relations and Communications, Purina Mills, Inc.
Al Giombetti, SUV/Truck Group Marketing Manager, Ford Division - Ford Motor Company
Kenneth A. Gregersen, Industry Liaison, The National Council for Agricultural Education
Richard C. Hahn, President & Chief Executive Officer, Farmers National Company
Dirk Hejnal, President & Chief Executive Officer, Westfalia•Surge, Inc.
E.C. "Murph" Henderson, Senior Consultant-Feed Industry, AgriCapital Corporation
Mark S. Hodgson, Vice President, Business Development, Novartis Animal Health U.S., Inc.
Bill Howard, Publisher, Fastline Publications
Stan J. Howell, Vice President, Insect Management, Dow AgroSciences
Pat James, President & Chief Financial Officer, Elanco Animal Health
Thomas D. Larson, Executive Vice President, Member and Public Affairs, CHS Cooperatives
Ed Nicholson, Director of Media & Community Relations, Tyson Foods, Inc.
Keelan W. Pulliam, Group Head, Syngenta Professional Products, Syngenta
Kerry Preete, Vice President, U.S. Branded Business, Monsanto Company
Gerald Puppe, Vice President, Loss Adjustment, National Crop Insurance Services
Chris Ragland, Vice President, Commercial Operations, Intervet Inc.
John Rakestraw, President & Chief Executive Officer, ContiBeef LLC
Stephen L. Rhea, President, Rhea and Kaiser Marketing Communications
Chuck P. Roth, President, Farm Progress Companies, Inc.
Judy Russell, Senior Director, Global Marketing and Brand Promotion, Case IH
Drue M. Sander, Vice President, Administration, Farmland Industries, Inc.
Diane E. Stadlen, Senior Vice President, cmf&z
Rick Van Genderen, Director, U.S. Crop Protection, BASF
Bill Waack, President and Chief Executive Officer, Quality Stores, Inc.
Alan D. Willits, Vice President, U.S. Ag Producer Services, Cargill
David R. Zerfoss, President, Husqvarna Forest and Garden Company

15-25-35-50 year sponsors

50 Year Sponsors
Aventis CropScience - Research Triangle Park, NC
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation - Cicero, IL

35 Year Sponsors
Bayer Corporation, Professional Care - Kansas City, MO
Farm Credit System Foundation - Washington, DC
Feeds, Inc. - Muscatine, IA
Novartis Animal Health US, Inc. - Greensboro, NC
Sears Manufacturing Company - Davenport, IA
The Sherwin-Williams Foundation - Cleveland, OH

25 Year Sponsors
Agricultural Education Society University of Wisconsin River Falls - River Falls, WI
CHS Cooperatives - St. Paul, MN
Farmers National Company - Omaha, NE
Finney Company, Inc./Hobar Publications - Minneapolis, MN
Milk Specialties Company - Dundee, IL
Donald L. Staheli - New Canaan, CT
J. R. Simplot - Boise, ID
Who's Who Among American High School Students - Lake Forest, IL

15 Year Sponsors
Agri-Fab - Sullivan, IL
Agri-Sales Associates, Inc. - Nashville, TN
Allflex USA, Inc. - Dallas/Ft. Worth Airport, TX
Apache Hose & Belting, Inc. - Cedar Rapids, IA
Blue & Gold Sausage - Jones, OK
Jeff Brazo - Sturgis, MI
Casey, Ezell & Associates - Franklin, TN
Chicago Mercantile Exchange, Inc. - Chicago, IL
Desa International - Bowling Green, KY
Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company of Iowa - Des Moines, IA
Gaylord Container Foundation - Deerfield, IL
Kenneth A. Gregersen - Gold Canyon, AZ
Grinnell Mutual Group - Grinnell, IA
John L. Hagaman - Whitestown, IN
David R. Hill - Liberty, MO
Kenneth P. Johnson - Peoria, AZ
David A. Miller - Frederick, MD
Osmundson Manufacturing Company - Perry, IA
Pacer Pumps, Div. ASM Industries, Inc. - Lancaster, PA
Poli-Tron, Inc. - Pittsburg, KS
Samuelson Associates, Inc. - Cedar Rapids, IA
Sheffield Clark & Co. - Franklin, TN
Special Products Company - Golden, CO
Stanley Muffler Company, Inc. - East Prairie, MO
Swiss Valley Farms Co. - Davenport, IA
Vogelzang International Corp. - Holland, MI
Walls Industries, Inc. - Cleburne, TX
Clayton Williams - Carmel, IN
Wilson-Beam & Company - Dayton, TN
Donald W. Wittnam - Greeley, CO
Y-Tex Corporation - Cody, WY

KENT

Kelly Rogers

FFA members enjoyed the career show and took an active part in companies' displays. This student climbed up, up and away in the Husqvarna booth.

career show

A sea of blue jackets filled the 2001 FFA National Agricultural Career Show® as FFA members researched universities, made contacts, looked at new products and picked up free information and promotional materials from companies.

364 exhibitors participated in this year's career show, which included 43 state associations, 92 universities and colleges and 73 first-time exhibitors. FFA members participated in many activities from trivia challenges to rope-climbing and pedal-tractor races, all in some way related to career opportunities. Many FFA members carried bags full of free items; some carried several. With so much to see, many made repeat visits and are excitedly waiting for next year's show.

hall of states

Alabama Associaton • Alaska Association
Arizona Association • Arkansas Association
California Association
Connecticut Association • Delaware Association
Florida Association • Georgia Association
Hawaii Association
Idaho Association
Illinois Association • Indiana Association
Iowa Association • Kansas Association
Kentucky Association • Louisiana Association
Maryland Association
Massachusetts Association
Michigan Association • Minnesota Association
Mississippi Association • Missouri Association
Montana Association
Nebraska Association
New Hampshire Association
New Jersey Association
New Mexico Association
New York Association
North Carolina Association
North Dakota Association
Pennsylvania Association • Puerto Rico Association
South Carolina Association
South Dakota Association
Tennessee Association
Texas Association • Utah Association
Vermont Association • Virginia Association
West Virginia Association
Wisconsin Association
Wyoming Association

career show

Wales Hunter

Many exhibitors encourage students to learn about their organization through fun activities.

exhibitors

Abraham Baldwin Ag College
Acro Publishing
ADM MoorMan's
Ag Products, Inc.
Ag Services of America, Inc./Powerfarm.com
AGCO
AgEdNet.com
Agricultural Consortium of Texas
Abilene Christian, Angelo State, Prairie View A&M, Sam Houston State, Southwest Texas State, Stephen F. Austin State, Sul Ross State, Tarleton State, Texas A&M, Texas A&M Commerce, Texas A&M-Kingsville, Texas Tech, West Texas A&M
AgriSolutions
Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity
American Angus Association
American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials (AAVIM)
American Belgian Blue Breeders
American Blonde d'Aquitaine Association
American Dairy Goat Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Gelbvieh Association
American Hereford Association
American Income Life Insurance Company
American National Cattlewomen Foundation, Inc.
American Paint Horse Association
American Quarter Horse Youth Association
American Shorthorn Association
American Simmental Association
American Tractor Pullers Association
American Veterinary Medical Association
Animal Industry Foundation
Applied Technologies
Aquacenter, Inc.
Aquatic Eco Systems
Archer Daniels Midland Co.
Auburn University
Bayer Corporation, Agricultural Division
Bekaert Wire
Belgian Blue Breeders Inc.
Berne Apparel
Black Hawk College
Briggs & Stratton Corporation
Burley Tobacco Growers
BWI Companies, Inc.
Cabela's
Cal Poly Pomona
Fastline Publications
Federal Cartridge Co. and RCBS
Fellowship of Christian Farmers International
Ferrum College
Firestone Agricultural Tire Company
Florida Farm Bureau Marketing Division
Florida Fruit Association, Inc.
Ford Trucks
Full Circle Registry
GBC Customized Calendars
Georgia Ag Education Consortium
Georgia Boot
The Globe Program
Glory Be Collectibles
Golf Course Superintendents Association of America
Greater Louisville Inc., The Metro Chamber of Commerce
Hanson Aggregates Midwest, Inc.
Haywood Community College
Hobar Publications/Finney Company
Hobart Welders
Holstein Foundation
Hormel Foods Corporation
Horticopia Inc.
Hummert International
Husqvarna
International Association of Arboriculture, National Arborist Association, Associated Landscape Contractors of America, Arbor Masters Training
IBP Inc.
Illinois State University
IMC Salt Co.
Institute of Food Technologists
Instructional Materials Lab-University of Missouri
Instructional Materials Service Texas A&M University
International Greenhouse Company
International Technology Education Association
International Truck and Engine Corp.
Interstate Publishers, Inc.
Iowa FFA Foundation, Inc.
Iowa State University College of Agriculture
Iron Solutions, LLC
John Deere
John Deere Credit
Johnson & Wales University
Kansas State University
National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants
National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE)
National Association of Farm Broadcasters
National Bison Association
National Council for Agricultural Education
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National FFA Agri-Entrepreneurship Finalists
National FFA Agricultural Youth Safety Programs
National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety, Farm Safety 4 Just Kids, Progressive Farmer Safety Day Camps, TASK, National Safety Council
National FFA Agriscience Fair
National FFA Agriscience Student Award Program Displays
National FFA Alumni Association
National FFA Community of Service Youth Service America, National Peer Helpers Association, Food Resource Bank, Points of Light Foundation, Americais Promise, Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences
National FFA Global Village
National FFA Organization Programs
National FFA PALS Program
National High School Rodeo Association
National Institute for Animal Agriculture
National Pork Board
National Rifle Association of America
National Shooting Sports Foundation
National Swine Registry
National Tractor Pullers Championships
National Wild Turkey Federation
Nebraska Consortium for Ag. Sciences and Natural Resources Edu. University of Nebraska, Northeast Community College, Southeast Community College, Central Community College, Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, Western Nebraska Community College
New Holland Credit Corp.
New Holland North America
New Mexico State University
Norcross Safety Products
North American Limousin Foundation
North Carolina A & T State University
North Carolina State University
North Dakota State University
Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College
Northwest Missouri State University
Sullivan Colleges System
Sundowner Trailers
SUNY Cobleskill
SUNY Morrisville
Superior Growers Supply
Tendersticks, L.L.C.
The American Phytopathological Society
The Associated Equipment Distributors Foundation
The Davey Tree Expert Company
The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
The Humane Society of the United States
The Ohio State University
The Ohio State University Department of Food, Ag. & Biol Engineering.
The Ohio State University Dept. of Human & Community Resource Development
The Ohio State University School of Natural Resources
The University of Arizona
Top Cut Showpig Sires
Toyota Motor Sales, USA Inc.
Tractor Supply Company
Tulsa Welding School
Tyson Foods Inc
U.S. Air Force Recruiting Service
U.S. Army Recruiting Command
U.S. Custom Harvesters, Inc.
U.S. Department of Education OVAE
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U.S. Marine Corps
U.S. Navy Recruiting Command
Underhill Farms
United Parcel Service (UPS)
University of Alaska Fairbanks – SALRM
University of Arkansas
University of Arkansas Department of Crop, Soil & Environmental Sciences
University of California – Davis
University of Delaware
University of Florida
University of Illinois
University of Kentucky
University of Kentucky Distance Learning Programs
University of Minnesota-St. Paul
University of Missouri-Columbia
University of Northwestern Ohio
University of Tennessee – Knoxville
University of Wisconsin - Madison
University of Wisconsin – Platteville
University of Wisconsin – River Falls
University of Wyoming
USDA Ag in the Classroom
USDA – APHIS – PPO
USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service
USDA Economic Research Service
USDA Farm Service Agency
USDA Foreign Agricultural Service
USDA Forest Service
USDA Marketing and Regulatory Programs, Recruitment
USDA National Agricultural Library
USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service /CENSUS
USDA National Animal Disease Center
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA Office of Human Resources Management
USDA Office of Inspector General
USDA Risk Management Agency
USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service
Venturing Division, Boy Scouts of America
Verti-Gro, Inc.
Vidalia Onion Fund Raising
Virginia Tech
Visual Impact Imaging
Ward's Natural Science
Western Illinois University
Western Kentucky University
Winchester Ammunition-Olin Corporation
WIX Filters Products Division of Dana Corporation
Wrangler
Yavapai College
Zap-A-Snack
Zeecraft Tech.

Cal Poly - San Luis Obispo
California Community Colleges
California State University Chico
California State University Fresno
Campbell Hausfeld
Carhartt, Inc.
Carolina Biological Supply Company
CAROUEST Corporation
Case IH
Caterpillar Agricultural Products, Inc.
Cave City Tourist & Convention Center
Ceres International Women's Fraternity
Champion Fruit Company
Chevrolet Motor Division
Chevron
Christian Kropf, Inc.
CHS Cooperatives
Clemson University
College of Southern Idaho Aquaculture Program
Colorado State University
Communicating for Agriculture Exchange Program
Cornell University
Crosman Airguns
Dee Zee Manufacturing
Delaware State University
Delaware Valley College
Delmar Thomson Learning
Diversified Fund Raisers; Bob's Fund Raising
Diversified Marketing Associates, Inc.
Dodge
Dow AgroSciences
DTN (Data Transmission Network)
DuPont
Durango Boot
Eagle Point Software
Eastern Kentucky University
Equine Industry Program/University of Louisville
Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education FCAE
Farm Credit Services
Farm Works Software
Farm World Newspaper
Farmers for Christ, International
FarmHouse Fraternity
Farmland Industries, Inc.
Kentucky Beef Council
Kentucky Department of Agriculture
Kentucky Department of Education
Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance Companies
Kentucky Fish and Wildlife
Kentucky Soybean Association
Kentucky State University
Kentucky Thoroughbred Association
Kentucky Wood Products
Keystone Steel & Wire Company
Kosair Charities
Kraft Foods
Kroger
Ky Llama and Alpaca Assn
L. C. Fund Raising, Inc.
Lake City Community College
Lake Land College
Langdon Barber Groves, Inc.
Laser Shot
Lexington Convention & Visitors Bureau
Licensure in Education for Agricultural Professionals (LEAP)
Lincoln Electric Company
Longwood Graduate Program
Louisiana State University
Louisville Lincoln Tourism Region
Ludy Greenhouse Manufacturers
Maple Grove Distributing, Inc.
Mason County Fiscal Court
Michelin Agricultural Tires
Michigan State University
Mississippi State University
Missouri Fox Trotters Horse Breed Association
Modesto Junior College
Monsanto Company
Morehead State University
Morton Salt
Murray State University
NAPA AUTO PARTS
Nashville Auto-Diesel College
National AgrAbility Program
National Agricultural Alumni and Development Association (NAADA)
National Agricultural Aviation Association
Ohio Agricultural Technical Institute
Ohio Corn Marketing Program
Ohio Curriculum Materials Service
Ohio Technical College
Oklahoma Curriculum & Instructional Materials Center
Oklahoma Panhandle State University
Oklahoma State University
Oklahoma Steel and Wire
Oregon State University
Pee Jay's Fresh Fruit
Pennsylvania State University
Pennzoil Quaker State
Prairie Candle Company
Prentice Hall
Preston Farms
Project Food, Land & People
Purdue University
Purina Mills, Inc.
Ranger Boats
Really Big Coloring Books LLC
RFD-TV
Rimol Greenhouse Systems, Inc.
Rose Acre Farms, Inc.
Rotary International
Safari Club Internationat Foundation
Sandy Candy
Sigma Alpha Sorority
Society of American Florists
Society of American Foresters
Sooner Trailer Mfg.
Southern Arkansas University
Southern Heritage Fundraising
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Southwest Missouri State University
Space Educators Initiatives
Spartan School of Aeronautics
Sports Turf Managers' Association
Stone Manufacturing & Supply Company
Student Express
Stuppy Greenhouse Manufacturing Company

courtesy corps

Kelly Rogers

From stuffing envelopes to moving boxes to providing backstage security, courtesy corps members made the convention a huge success by attending to the details.

Thanks to the hard work of the courtesy corps, the 74th National FFA Convention ran incredibly smoothly, as the corps helped with tasks including security and crowd control.

"I feel like I am behind-the-scenes and special," said Diana Barszcz of the Lyman Hall FFA Chapter in Connecticut. "I also love meeting all the different people."

In order to serve as courtesy corps, students had to fill out an application and specify the times they were available to work. The FFA staff gives a big thanks to these students who make convention such a huge success. Their behind-the-scenes help makes a real difference!

Alabama: Billingsley, Marbury

Alaska: Palmer

Arizona: Hamilton, Mesquite

Arkansas: Blytheville, Guy-Perkins, Sheridan, Wynne

California: McFarland

Connecticut: Lyman Hall

Florida: Auburndale, Bartow Middle, Durant, New Smyrna Beach, Ponce de Leon, Redland Middle, Williston

Georgia: Dade County, Dodge County, Etowah, Pepperell

Illinois: Georgetown - Ridge Farm, Liberty, Tri-Point

Indiana: Clinton Central, Clinton Prairie, Hamilton, Indian Creek, North Harrison, North Newton, South Ripley, Switzerland County, Woodlan

Iowa: Akron - Westfield, Cascade, Centerville, Decorah, Iowa State University, Manson Northwest, Van Buren

Kansas: Central Heights, Columbus, Neodesha

Kentucky: Carroll County, Apollo, Ballard Memorial, Bracken County, Butler County, Christian County, John Hardin, Larue County, Larue County, Lincoln County, Mason County, Nelson County, Spencer County, Washington County, Webster

Louisiana: Bogalusa

Maine: Ashland

Minnesota: Chaska

Mississippi: Taylorsville

Missouri: Brounaugh, Couch, Doniphan R-1, Gallatin R-V, Greenfield, Hermann, Higginsville, Koshkonong, Lamar AVTS, Marion Co R-II, Nevada, Odessa, Osage Co R-1, Palmyra, Schuyler R-1, Union R-XI, Walnut Grove

Nebraska: Hartington, Newman Grove

New Hampshire: Seacoast School of Technology

New Jersey: Penns Grove

North Dakota: Bismarck, Kenmare, Killdeer, Larimore

Ohio: Amanda - Clearcreek

Oklahoma: Aline-Cleo, Butler, Cashion, Elk City, Tecumseh

Oregon: Perrydale

Pennsylvania: Big Spring, Cumberland Valley, Gettysburg, West Snyder

South Carolina: Bowman, Edisto, Laurens District 55, Manning

South Dakota: Gettysburg, McCook Central

Tennessee: Loretto

Texas: A&M Consolidated, Academy, Bellaire, Bland, Boles, Bremond ISD, Bryan, Cedar Hill, Chico, Clear Brook, Columbus, Cotton Center, Crosby, Crowley, Cumby, Decatur, East Bernard, East Central, Forney, Franklin, Glen Rose, Gold-Burg, Hargrave, Hartley, Humble, Iowa Park, James Madison, Killeen, Kingwood, Kirbyville, Lewisville, Lone Oak, Mabank, Madisonville, Mansfield, Mexia, Northwest, Rochelle, S.H. Rider, Sam Rayburn, Schulenburg, Sealy, Snyder, Spring Branch, Trenton, Enterprise

Virgin Islands: St. Croix Education Complex

Washington: Washinton State FFA Association, Yelm

Wisconsin: Eau Claire Memorial, New Glarus, Oconto Falls, Stevens Point Area, Sun Prairie, Wauzeka-Steuben

delegate sessions

business

Delegates from each state arrived at the convention site early to prepare committee reports. They discussed several important issues that affect the FFA. The Agricultural Education Trends committee discussed the current agriculture teacher shortage. They proposed providing additional scholarships for students pursuing an agricultural education degree.

The Communications and Public Relations Committee provided suggestions on the FFA brand and how it could be communicated more consistently to enhance the image of the National FFA Organization to members, advisors, sponsors and the general public. The committee also discussed the 75th Anniversary National FFA Convention. Delegates suggested national staff create a promotional video to show at state conventions, highlighting past conventions and previewing the anniversary celebration.

The Marketing and Merchandising Committee Report recommended reducing prices on apparel to increase sales and promote the FFA. They also suggested several new products including hats, clothing items and photo albums.

FFA has a bright future due largely to the hard work and dedication of delegates, all of whom envision an organization that strives to meet the expectations of the 21st Century.

Ed Zurga

In a united effort, the national officers and staff call to order another year of unforgettable memories and experiences. The delegate assembly was sponsored by the City of Louisville as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

official delegates

official delegates

ALABAMA: Jennifer Himburg, Ariton; Grace Smith, Billingsley; Devin Dotson, Red Bay; Dennis Busby, Kinston; Ashley Green, New Brockton; Jarrod Smitherman, Isabella; Jessica Ogburn, New Brockton; Christopher Randolph, Jacksonville; Amy Alverson, Munford; Thomas Hall, Isabella; Nikki Byrd, Slocomb; Mary Ellen Blackwood, Douglas; Brett Crowe, Danville; Heath Lake, West Point; Marissa Hulsey, Spring Garden

ALASKA: Holly Willardson, Palmer; Jennifer Poindexter, Homer

ARIZONA: Holly Goodman, San Tan; Amanda Leister, Buckeye; Bill Cotten, Payson; Todd Rovey, Buckeye; Danny Wilkins, Willcox

ARKANSAS: Chase Hilton, Mena; Matt Fryar, Lake Hamilton; Andrea Hankins, Cabot; Josh Garner, Melbourne; Jennifer Lyons, South Side; Samantha Goss, Camden-Fairview; Tory Hodges, Alpena; Craig Dewey, Prairie Grove; Michael Dyar (Alt.), Lewisville; Caroline Carpenter, Cabot; Dusty Key (Alt.), Cabot; Michelle Redmond, Mountain Home; Justin Jett, Melbourne; James Nutt, Lewisville

CALIFORNIA: Mark Aguiar, Tulare Union; Molly Fagundes, Atwater; Jeff Alves, Galt; Denita Arens, Biggs; Jennifer Arnall, Grass Valley-Bear River; Dennis Blackman, Riverside-Norte Vista; Carrie Bledsoe, Riverdale; David Brame, Fullerton; Luke Browning, Grass Valley-Bear River; Melody Carter, Calexico; Lesley Close, Santa Roasa-Elsie Allen; Amanda Courtney, Grass Valley, Nevada Union; Beth Sequeira, Hanford; Erica Flores, Santa Ynez; Megan McDonald, Morgan Hill-Live Oak; Natalie Phipps, Fresno-Central; Jonnalee Henderson, Arbuckle-Pierce; Howard Wilson, Tomales; Brandon Garcia, Hamilton City; Martina Otterbeck, Sanger; Anna Good, Ramona; Laura Jack, Eureka; Amber Lawrence, Grass Valley - Bear River; Brandon Souza, Hanford; Neil Gibson, Lucerne Valley; Christine St. Pierre, Chowchilla; Tim Hammerich, Santa Rosa-Elsie Allen; Anne Marie Diener, Riverdale; Dustin Spense, Grass Valley-Bear River; Douglas Paasch, Grass Valley-Bear River; Becky Roland, El Capitan; Leeman Parker, Elk Grove; Sammy Ramirez, Corcoran; Nicolina Prestininzi, Fallbrook; Jodee Stellina, Grass Valley-Nevada Union; Brianna Frankiewich, Strathmore; Monique Waterman, Tollhouse-Sierra; Gabriel Ponce', Santa Maria; Lindsay Maddox, Riverdale; Brian Toledo, Galt; Chris Ide, Norco; Amanda Gilson, Visalia-Redwood; Amanda Gipe, Merced-Golden Valley; Bryan Dodson, Chico; Julie Kondoff, Morgan Hill-Live Oak; Ryan Cummings, Valley-Bear River; John Diaz, Fresno-Central; Carmen Cervantes, Lucerne Valley

COLORADO: Stacy Loutzenhiser, Flager; Darcie Schmidt, Valley; Ben Hendrix, Wray; Tyler Knott, Soroco; Tyson Reents, Burlington; Justin Tedford, Ft. Lupton

CONNECTICUT: Heidi Stearns, Storrs Regional; Martin Vito, Mattabeset; Kathy Benoit, Rockville; Julie Simmons, Suffield Regional

DELAWARE: Holly Scuse, Smyrna; Jay Baxter, Sussex Central; Jonathan Snow, Smyrna; Jimmy Powell, Caesar Rodney

FLORIDA: Amanda Thomas, Lake Butler; Brandy Lee, Lake Gibson; Lindsey Land, Susanna; Emily Hand, Blounstown; Melissa Stanley, North Marion; Sorrell Vickers, Southeast Manntee; Caela Paioff, Charlotte; Ellie McKenzie, Ft. Meade; Elizabeth Ramirez, Miami; Chad Lyons, Lafayette; Jordan Sims, Marianna; Heather Barton, Bunnell

GEORGIA: Kit Napier, Lake Fort Oglethorpe; Trisha Stephens, Tift County; Matthew McCutcheon, North Hall; Charles Gay, ECI; Jonathan Willis, Oconee County; Lori Gilbert, Miller County; Denise Haynes, Harlem; John Thornton, Wayne County; Brandon Giddens, Mitchell-Baker; John Bramblett, Jefferson; Michael Watson, Northeast Bibb; Abby Sprull, Jackson; Joel McKie, Wilcox County; Stephanie Cleary, Tift; Catrina Kennedy, Claxton; Caci Cook, Johnson County; Jamie Dodd, Dade County

HAWAII: Heather Kihara, Leilehua; Aaron Quitugua-Flores, Leilehua

IDAHO: Clint Stevenson, Meridian; Meagan Lancaster, Weiser; Kristine Miller, Marsing; Angeanna Little, Sugar Salem; Cassie Bishop, Vallivue

ILLINOIS: Sarah Swenson, Newark; Colleen Dickinson, Amboy; Tyson Wedekind, Westmer; Leon Adams, Mt. Vernon; Jesse Faber, Mendota; Emilee Brocker, Eastland; Adam Buss, Unity; Tammy DeCounter, Northwestern; Derek Light, Cumberland; Mike Roach, Sycamore; Rebecca Yandall, Vienna; Andrew Birchen, Pearl City; Karen Stuart, Taylorville; Meagan Wells, Cisne; Drew DeRiemacker, Geneseo

INDIANA: Stacie Warner, Whitko; Tanya Hadley, Woodlan; Amzr Faghih, Carroll at Ft. Wayne; Jake Wilkins, Oak Hill; Jason Clapp, Riverton Parke; Mallory Tarr, Franklin; Cody Linville, Frankton; Catherine Reisert, Connersville; Tristan Emery, Mt. Vernon

IOWA: Jesse Ulrich, Hawkeye at West Bend; Amanda Dight, Osage; Kyle Bloom, Indianola; Angela Fredericks, Osage; Rob Rudolphi, Williamburg; Blake Brockway, Indianola; Amanda Wolter, Emmetsburg; Jill Leistikow, Wapsie Valley; Holly Apperson, Davis Rodgers

KANSAS: Lindsey George, Uniontown; Keith Bryant, Arkansas City; Michael Burns, Jetmore; Lance Zimmerman, Hays; Tara Lindahl, Chapman; Grant Groene, Winfield

KENTUCKY: Whitney LeGrand, Gallatin County; Tiffany Brammell, East Carter; Brooke Core, Mercer County; Matthew Simpson, Warren East; Lucinda Thompson, Fleming; Matthew Meyer, Adair; Derrick Benton, Muhlenberg; Bill Riley, Marshall; Racheal Richardson, Central Hardin; Susan Mitchell, Henderson County; Jennifer Welch, Jackson County; Ryan Quarles, Scott County; Holly Gilpin, Green

LOUISIANA: Samantha Bell, Ebarb; Ty Istre, Sulphur; Robyn Hunter, Calvin; Kyle Chandler, Calvin; Nicki Johnson, Ruston; Leanna Becnel, Thibodaux; Adrienne Miller, Iota; Evan Earl, Elizabeth; Jeffery Guidry, Beau Chene; Denver Robinson, Live Oak; Jacob Dufrene, LaFourche

MAINE: Michael Ireland II, Easton; Fred Hendrickson, PATHS; Jamie Thibodeau, Caribou

MARYLAND: Ashley Fox, Middletown; Katie Kindley, Harford Technical; Carrie Muller, Catoctin

MASSACHUSETTS: Kevin Bell; Julia Kennedy; Dylan Frazier, Smith

MICHIGAN: Loretta Towne, Fremont; Kendra Butters, Homer; Jon LaPorte, Cassopolis; Mallory Koglin, Port Hope; Todd Wolff, Bronson; Dene' Elliott, Saranac

MINNESOTA: Jeff Nelson, Albert Lea; Ida Matthys, Lakeview; Rachel Kohlman, Perham; Andrew Klein, Kimball; Jeremy Leitzen, Winona; Mamie Henderson, Zumbrota Mazeppa; Glen Groth, Winona; Karin Tesmer, Filmore Central; Karissa Ladlie, Albert Lea

MISSISSIPPI: Brian Dunn, Neshoba Central; Christy Windham, Northeast Jones; Crystal Palmer, Pine Grove; David Busby, Ackerman; Brad Lowery, Taylorsville

MISSOURI: Jamie Lile, Strafford; Erica Coble, Dadeville; Dustin Bauer, St. Joseph; Molly Quinn, Chillicothe; Andrea Olendorf, Salisbury; Jessica Lehenbauer, North Conway; Jason Hayes, Pleasant Hill; Ben Marshall, Jamestown; Crystal Mathews, Carthage; Renea Honeycutt, Couch; Jason Davis, Warrenton; Matt Fox, Woodland; Eric Boswell, Naylor; Dana Staley, King City

MONTANA: Austin Mapston, MT0023; Shaina Hofeldt, MT0015; Tyrele Schaff, MT0001; Jordan Knudsen, MT0020

NEBRASKA: Lucas Haag, Republican Valley; Jonie Garwood, Central City; Amy Rasmussen, Mead; Austin Schweitzer, Milford; Jon Sellenrick, Tri County; Vicki Wray, Ord

NEVADA: Haley Dahl, Churchill County; Seanne Culver, Ruby Mountain

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Joshua D'Agnese, Winnisquam; Johanna Robinston, Winnisquam

Cindy Stucky

Delegates representing every state, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands attended business sessions in Freedom Hall and made recommendations to guide the direction of the National FFA Organization.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Joshua D'Agnese, Winnisquam; Johanna Robinston, Winnisquam

NEW JERSEY: Micheal Brooks, Woodstown; Erin Zukus, Allentown; Christopher Nnadi, Penns Grove; Brian Dalbow, Penns Grove

NEW MEXICO: Codi Montes, Capitan; Johnathan Walsh, Moriarty; Chelsea Blazano, Clayton; Quentin Ray, Grady; Dal Frost, Corona

NEW YORK: Veronica Goodman, South Jefferson; Theresa Dewey, Sherman; Ginger Bushey, North Adirondack; Justin Cooper, South Jefferson; Jessica Fisher, Greenville

NORTH CAROLINA: Jason Chester, South Rowan; Callie Birdsell, Ashe County; Amanda Ross, Croatan; Caleb Parker, Northeastern; Paula Broome, Piemont; Phil Blackman, Hobbton; Jessica Walters, Lakewood; Heather Cutchin, West Columbus; Lindsay Thornton, South Johnston; Shauna Dorman, Triton; Jennifer Carter, Creswell; Andrea Houston, Richlands

NORTH DAKOTA: Sarah Jorde, Towner; Jason Suydam, Garrison; Corey Morlock, Medina; Jill Hegland, Maddock; Heidi Brandt, New Salem; Jesse Cook, Kenmare; Kimberly Schaff, Mandan

OHIO: Mindy Dye, Lynchburg Clay; Anne Knapke, Talawanda; Ryan Rismiller, Versailles; Jessica Rice, Elgin; Jenny Engle, Elmwood; Marlene von Stein, Cory Rawson; Heather Makarius, Amanda Clearcreek; Kevin Fath, Northwestern; Heather Noll, Sheridan; Lindsey Calhoun, Ross; Brittney Baldwin, Fairfield; Lucy Bowen, Parkway; Mark Thomas, Anthony Wayne; Aftan Campbell, Upper Scioto Valley; Jenilee Kinney, Carrollton; Jenni Wilson, Arlington; Kisha Bodey, Monroeville; Karen Blankenship, Lynchburg Clay; Mindy Henney, Bellevue; Luke Ryan, Anthony Wayne

OKLAHOMA: Casey Smith, Medford; Jered Jones, Beggs; Trey Cox, Stigler; Jonathan Holloway, Chattanooga; Mandy Campbell, Depew; Mindi Luce, Braman; Tara Wright, Chandler; Beth Robinson, Hollis; Dustie Butner, Bethel; Jeremy Cowley, Morrison; Nancy Potter, Merritt; Kristi Sumpter, Reydon; Karla Parks, Calera; Kelli Lynn Parks, Calera; Jason Frantz, Balko Macay Bolay, Perry; Bill Shelby, Webbers Falls; Cody Tutwiler, Thomas Fay-Custer; Daniel Mosburg, Thomas Fay Custer; Gregory Black, Burns Flat-Dill City

OREGON: Mike Folin, Crater; Darcy Vial, Newberg; Joanna Farnsworth, Hood River; Wes Crawford, Sutherlin; Brian Kitamura, Ontario; Gina Higley, Elgin

PENNSYLVANIA: Bernadette Nace, Big Spring; Karrie Kehr, Grassland; Jeremy Ranck, Hans Herr; Isaac Harrington, Albion; Amanda Brown, Danville; Lisa Fetscher, Philadelphia; Holly Rankin, Red Lion; Lance Bittner, Brothers Valley; Cody Holden, Tri-Valley

PUERTO RICO: Adam Cruz, Roman B. deCastro; Amneris Rodriguez, Dr. Jose' Padin; Ismael Badillo, Antonio-Badillo

RHODE ISLAND: Timothy Tefft Jr., Chariho

SOUTH CAROLINA: Kyle Hatcher, Crescent; Hobson Fulcher Jr. Aiken; Eric Hill, Abbeville; Joshua Shea, Calhoun Falls; Ashley Granata, BJ Skelton; Jennifer Perdue, McBee; Joshua Laws, West-Oak

SOUTH DAKOTA: Jack Anderson, Lemmon; Lavyne Wieting, Milbank; Kim Franken, Chester; Josh Hehn, Rapid City; Brad Bies, McCook Central

TENNESSEE: Landon Loveall, Portland; Landon Lingerfelt, Hampton; Justin Holt, Mt. Pleasant; Brady Lewis, Munford; Lauren Mangrum, White House; Holli Turner, Covington; Jason Wallace, McEwen; Nioka Brewer, Johnson County; Hannah Collier, White County; Rachael Klamer, Munford; Chris Vessell, Lincoln; Danelle Connor, Warren

TEXAS: Kurtis Thomas, Pasadena; Lacee Fraze, Lubbock-Cooper; Hannah Boedeker, Valley; Julie Weathers, Lubbock-Cooper; Shannon Chambers, Snyder; Stephanie Frazen, Palacios; Stormy Sparkman, Round Top-Carmine; Lindsay Allen, Alvin; Rochelle Strickland, Stephenville; Brooke Bounds, Bellevue; Janie VanCleave, Jim Ned; Stacy Fox, Springtown; Jessica Robinson, Gunter; Christi Evans, Pilot Point; Patty Edwards, Harmony; Hollie Johnsons, Big Sandy; Amy Vance, Winnsboror; Cora DeLeon, Hondo; Stephanie Hoffer, Navarro; Kristi Hozdulick, Waxahachie; Jordan Gilbreath, Fairfield; Ashley Abele, Latexo; Brian Frazee, Burkeville; Kandice Krenek, Lyford; Amy Fowler, Pleasanton; Natalie Wolff, Taft; Kymberly Edds, Central Heights; Erin Frazier, Tuloso-Midway; Cody Gladney, Tascosa; Jay Seaton, Lazbuddie; Keaton Askew, New Home; Justin Bunch, Greenwood; Ben Frazier, Caney Creek; David Rice, Perrin; Whit Reynolds, Goldburg; Jaci Jaggers, Sulphur Bluff; Matthew Luensmann, East Central; Ross Oliver, Lampassas; Brian Bursey, Cleburne; Andy Traylor, Fairfield; Coy Baldwin, Leon; Jordan Provost, Cleveland; Raymond Earwood, Freer; TJ Lewis, Anson; Joe Bob Adkins, Mineral Wells; Casey Hogan, Arlington-Martin; Brandon Nelson, Chapel Hill Northeast; Tate Rosenbusch, Glen Rose; Dustin Adkin, Cedar Park

UTAH: Steven Yardley, Beaver; Tiffany Ferguson, Payson; Abby Evans, Lehi; Jeffrey Jeppson, Bear River

VERMONT: Rebecca Manning, Missisquoi Valley; Jill Kelley, Missisquoi Valley

VIRGIN ISLANDS: Damaso Rivera, St. Crouix; Dane McDougal, St. Crouix -Central

VIRGINIA: Amanda Lambert, Turner Ashby; Todd Sadler, Caroline; Matthew Spears, Carroll County; Amanda Mann, Louisa; Carly Tilson, Dinwiddie; Chad Brooks, Stuarts Draft; Jaclyn Roller, Stratsburg; Mindy Haymaker, Sherando; Aaron Spaid, James Wood

WASHINGTON: Jesse Taylor, Sumner; Morgan Irwin, Enumclaw; Becky Wallace, Yelm; Justin Leighton, Franklin Pierce; Dan Tedor, Cashmere; Tawna Paine, Cashmere; Angie Veldhuizen, Enumclaw; Melissa Nussbaum, Willapa Valley

WEST VIRGINIA: Nathan Taylor, Ravenswood; Katie Fitzsimmons, Cameron; Amber Somerville, Wirt County; Susan Wilkins, Pocahontas County; Andrea Hunt, Roane County; Steve Prinkey, University High

WISCONSIN: Erik Blaser, Oconto Falls; Cortney Peissig, Colby; Matthew Schleusner, Barron; Troy Talford, Durrand; Becky Marshall, Kickapoo; Jason James, Mineral Point; Kory Duerst, Verona; Melissa Copas, Tri-County; Crystal Seefeldt, Spencer; Leslie Shuler, Pulaski; Shane Westphal, Big Foot; Jeni Reese, Johnson Creek; Branden Bodendorfer, Spencer; Diana Heller, New Holstein; Diann Andre, Cochrane-Fountain City

WYOMING: Jacque Wright, Pine Bluffs; Jeremy Kisling, Lander; Tim Cassidy, Cheyenne; Kristi Holumn, Gillette

official delegates

committee reports

agricultural education trends

We recommend:

Career Clusters

1. *The National FFA implements an online survey concentrating on career interest in agriculture. This survey should be very detailed and offer a variety of career options identifying the career cluster that best fits your career interest.
2. The National FFA provide promotional materials, such as a CD ROM and pamphlet, to guidance counselors, administration, educators and teachers from all schools in the nation explaining how Agricultural Education and FFA integrates concepts from all career clusters into its programs.
3. The National FFA work with the National Council for Agricultural Education in developing a career exploration curriculum targeted at middle school and Greenhand students focusing on career options in agriculture and natural resources.
4. We realize the adverse effects that career clusters could have on Agricultural Education/FFA and we recommend that the National FFA monitor the implementation of career clusters and how they will affect Agricultural Education/FFA in the future.

Educational Accountability

1. *An adoption of an accumulative scholarship given to every grade level and level of membership. A student may apply for the scholarship no matter their high school grade or years of membership, even if they have applied and been rejected before. Once a member has been accepted, as long as they continue to meet minimal requirements for each progressive year, their benefits grow until they receive the scholarship upon entering college. Holding the scholarship for longer amounts of time yields cumulative rewards.
2. A new awards recognition program for students exceeding in areas such as academics and FFA, and are nominated through an application process by their advisors to receive a special award. (example: the honor athlete program)
3. To develop an online publication to inform people worldwide of current issues facing the agricultural industry in conjunction with the National FFA webpage by having a registration page or separate link so people can sign-up to receive information.
4. To have a traveling agricultural issues camp similar in structure to MFE, but focusing on the current issues and concerns pertaining to agriculture, to be paid for by corporate sponsors in return for publicity at the camp.

Teacher Shortage

1. *National FFA provide additional scholarships for those students that are in agricultural education majors planning to pursue a teaching career after college. Only juniors and seniors in college eligible to apply. Application to apply and then interviews to narrow the decision down.
2. National FFA Organization work closely with agriculture universities to develop organizations and work more closely with those existing organizations that promote agriculture education and creating award programs, career development events, etc. recognizing collegiate student interested in agricultural education in order to prevent teacher shortage by creating and maintaining excitement about agricultural education.
3. The National level produces a program for high school students to promote agricultural education to middle school students.
4. Make use of the *New Horizons* magazine by promoting more teachers, good work through out a year's time. Send out flyers or newsletters to inform the community of the teacher's responsibilities to get parents and community members more involved and to recognize students who have decided to pursue a career in agricultural education.
5. National FFA request agencies and sponsors provide continuous information on new technologies and products within the agricultural industries (feeds, drugs, equipment, etc.) to state leaders.
6. National FFA provides training workshops and inservices in cooperation with state FFA association and agriculture teacher associations in order to provide information and support on using new technology.
7. *New Horizons* staff dedicate one page of the magazine to promote new technology including resources to find further information.

The Integration of Agricultural Education and FFA

1. *National FFA to produce a promotional package aimed directly at administration and faculty to show the value of agricultural education and FFA integration for their students. This package could include: pamphlets, video highlights, PowerPoint presentation, pre-packaged presentation.
2. National review of working models of agricultural education/FFA of integrating to produce their own integration process outline for states to model after. Produce a staff CD program packet on how to integrate Agriculture/FFA into core curriculum, using examples from states such as Illinois, North Carolina and Oklahoma.
3. Training for advisors on how to implement alumni, community and families to promote agricultural education and FFA integration through pamphlets a link off the national website and various methods.
4. To produce a nationally supported awareness campaign to state legislatures to give their support to publicize and enhance FFA and Agricultural Education integration.
5. Publicize chapter award community aspect to gain community support. In addition separate awards at the state level for local community involvement.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jesse Ulrich, IA (Chair)
Loretta Towne, MI (Vice-Chair)
Devin Dotson, AL
Brett Crowe, AL
Grace Smith, AL
Andrea Hankins, AR
Beth Sequeira, CA
Denita Arens, CA
Jeff Alves, CA
Erica Flores, CA
Megan McDonald, CA
Stacy Loutzenhiser, CO
Kathy Benoit, CT
Lindsey Land, FL
Matthew McCutcheon, GA
Michael Watson, GA
Tyson Wedekind, IL
Sarah Swenson, IL
Lance Zimmerman, KS
Brooke Core, KY
Evan Earl, LA
Jamie Thibodeau, ME
Andrew Kline, MN
Dustin Bauer, MO
Callie Birdsell, NC
Jason Chester, NC
Corey Morlock, ND
Austin Schweitzer, NE
Haley Dahl, NV
Jessica Fisher, NY
Ryan Rismiller, OH
Mark Thomas, OH
Karla Parks, OK
Trey Cox, OK
Jennifer Perdue, SC
Christi Evans, TX
Amy Fowler, TX
Kristi Hozdulick, TX
Lacee Fraze, TX
Stephanie Hoffer, TX
Whit Reynolds, TX
Steven Yardley, UT
Matthew Spears, VA
Crystal Seefeldt, WI

Ed Zurga

Agriculture teachers are vital to the success of FFA chapters and the experiences of members. A shortage of qualified teachers is an important issue FFA and agricultural education are facing.

career success activities

We Recommend:

Career-Based Awards and Degrees

1. *Promoting career-based awards through the use of an online survey to determine SAE compatibility and the categorizing of proficiency areas.
2. Send out a concise pamphlet directly to state officers containing information on career-based awards immediately after elections.
3. Offer an incentive program for advisors who use the Local Program Resource Guide CD through completing a survey.

Career Development Events and Marketing

1. *CDE tours should continue. To gather immediate feedback, an online survey should be established and available to complete immediately following the CDE tour.
2. Individual CDEs should be held in individual rooms. Holding rooms should be free of distractions.
3. That CDE descriptions should be thoroughly explained on the website. In addition to promoting the online CDE message board, *New Horizons* should also highlight a different CDE each month.
4. At the national FFA convention, there should be a CDE discussion panel on Friday after the CDEs are completed.
5. All final rounds of CDEs should be open for videotaping by any chapter that wishes to do so.

Supervised Agricultural Experience Development and Marketing

1. *Develop a standardized and student-friendly system of record keeping and state degree applications that shall be used by all state associations.
2. Establish ways to promote partnerships between local, state and national alumni and FFA members for the purpose of supervised agricultural experience (SAE) development.
3. Create a national award which recognizes chapters that promote SAE diversity.
4. Publicize the SAE website by making the link more prominent on the National FFA website, advertising it in *New Horizons* and designing supervised agricultural experience website posters.
5. Provide more specific and updated materials focusing on supervised agricultural experience development and diversity (e.g. videos, handbooks, publications) and promote these through advertisement.
6. Make proficiency award applications more student-friendly.

Career Success and Student Development

1. *Develop a link on the National FFA website that provides a survey that will encourages job awareness opportunities related to interests of FFA members.
2. In *New Horizons*, create a career focus section that contains an interest survey, regional information with career sponsors, interviews with industry leaders, success stories and college outlooks sponsored by colleges.
3. Create a booth outside the career show that contains the career interest survey on the FFA website and a booklet that breaks down proficiency awards into agriculturally related careers that are represented in the career show.
4. Create a CD that contains the interest survey and a virtual career show tour offering career descriptions, job outlooks, testimonials and personal insights from college students, professors and industry leaders.

Kelly Rogers

This FFA member reviewed the new National FFA Scholarship Book. Over $1.5 million will be awarded this year in scholarships, and last year, one out of eight members who applied received one!

Kelly Rogers

FFA members had the opportunity to talk with representatives from colleges and universities across the country at the career show.

Respectfully Submitted:

Kurtis W. Thomas, TX (Chair)
Dennis Busby, AL
Heath Lake, AL
Josh Garner, AR
Chase Hilton, AR
Carrie Bledsoe, CA
Luke Browning, CA
Jonnalee Henderson, CA
Natalie Phipps, CA
Howard Wilson, CA
Tyson Reents, CO
Julie Simmons, CT
Emily Hand, FL
Charles Gay, GA
Abby Spruill, GA
Rob Rudolphi, IA
Meagan Lancaster, ID
Leon Adams, IL
Karen Stuart, IL
Tristan Emery, IN
Michael Burns, KS
Matthew Simpson, KY
Denver Robinson, LA
Rachel Kohlman, MN
Molly Quinn, MO
Shaina Hofeldt, MT
Amanda Ross, NC
Jill Hegland, ND
Michael Brooks, NJ
Aftan Campbell, OH
Jessica Rice, OH
Jonathan Holloway, OK
Kelli Lynne Parks, OK
Darcy Vial, OR
Isaac Harrington, PA
Kyle Hatcher, SC
Landon Lingerfelt, TN
Hannah Boedeker, TX
Cora DeLeon, TX
Stacy Fox, TX
David Rice, TX
Janie VanCleave, TX
Todd Sadler, VA
Angie Veldhuizen, WA
Jason James, WI
Troy Talford, WI
Nathan Taylor, WV

committee reports

chapter development activities

Respectfully submitted:

Casey Smith, OK (Chairman)
Erica Coble, MO (Vice-Chair)
Jennifer Poindexter, AK
Ashley Green, AL
Jennifer Lyons, AL
Brandon Garcia, CA
Amanda Courtney, CA
Anna Good, CA
Laura Jack, CA
Martina Otterbeck, CA
Darcie Smith, CO
Melissa Stanley, FL
Kit Napier, GA
Amanda Walter, IA
Kristine Miller, ID
Meagan Wells, IL
Catherine Reisent, IN
Grant Groene, KS
Lucinda Thompson, KY
Adrienne Miller, LA
Jeffrey Guidry, LA
Katie Kindley, MD
Jeremey Leitzen, MN
Andrea Olendorff, MO
Christy Windham, MS
Tyrele Schaff, MT
Caleb Parker, NC
Erin Zukeus, NJ
Jenilee Kinney, OH
Jenny Engle, OH
Jason Frantz, OK
Mandy Cambell, OK
Joanna Farnsworth, OR
Bernadette Nace, PA
Joshua Laws, SC
Justin Holt, TN
Jay Seaton, TX
Dustin Akin, TX
Amy Vance, TX
Lindsay Allen, TX
Lee Simms, TX
Todd Sadler, VA
Amanda Lambert, VA
Morgan Irwin, WA
Matthew Schleusner, WI
Branden Bodendorfer, WI
Katie Fitzsimmons, WV

We recommend:

Agriculture Safety for the Real World

1. *Incorporate specific safety sections into each applicable proficiency award and CDE area.
2. Build partnerships with ag safety manufacturers to provide safety equipment and materials for chapters and agricultural programs.
3. Having a safety day as a part of National FFA Week that would include sponsoring a Farm Safety Day Camp, having agricultural leaders speak and implementing community safety courses.
4. Producing a National FFA sponsored Ag Safety video that would include a reference book with a CD.
5. Develop a section dealing directly with safety issues for the Local Program Resource Guide.

National Award for Real Involvement

1. *We recommend that the national organization informs members on the national chapter award by: sending information to chapter vice presidents, publishing information in *New Horizons* and by posting more appealing information on the National FFA website.
2. We recommend that chapters applying for state recognition use the National Chapter Award Application.
3. We recommend that state officers are informed by information being put into their BLAST Off Arsenals.
4. We recommend that an information wizard be inserted on the electronic national chapter award application.

Real Pals for Life

1. *Representative study or follow-up on PALS mentors and mentees for a period of time.
2. A new short video focusing on personal relationships, five to eight minutes in length.
3. An educational booth to be displayed at state conventions including funding information, National PALS contact information, what PALS is, how can PALS help and how can my chapter get started.
4. PALS pins for members to wear on jackets at local level and plaques to be awarded at the state level to recognize a chapter's participation in the PALS program.
5. Work with a business to develop a PALS bear for the FFA with a PALS emblem.

Quality Standards for a Real POA

1. *Develop a rubric with concrete examples of how activities fit into each division and the 15 standards
   a. Developed by National FFA
   b. Distributed to agriculture teachers, advisors and state officers
2. To provide standards and inform advisors, teachers, state officers and students about the structure of POA through:
   a. BLAST Off
   b. NLCSO
   c. Teacher conferences
   d. Leadership camps
   e. Officer training on the chapter level
3. Amend the 15 quality standards in the following ways:
   a. -I-1: Strike out the words "help the individual" and "technical"
   b. -I-3: Strike out the phrase "agriculture-related experience" and insert i. the words "agriculture placement, exploratory, research"
   c. -I-5: Include agricultural education under agriculture career skills

Cindy Stucky

Collegiate students networked with fellow agricultural education majors from across the country during the Alpha Tau Alpha conclave held in conjunction with the national FFA convention.

committee reports

Respectfully submitted:

Colleen Dickinson, IL (Chair)
Jack Anderson, SD (Vice-Chair)
Emilee Bocker, IL
Macay Bolay, OK
Paula Broome, NC
Melody Carter, CA
Justin Cooper, NY
Wes Crawford, OR
Michael Dyer, AR
Dal Frost, NM
Neil Gibson, CA
Mamie Henderson, MN
Fred Hendrickson, ME
Ben Hendrix, CO
Jennifer Himburg, AL
Ty Istre, LA
Jeff Jeppson, UT
Hollie Johnsons, TX
Amber Lawrence, CA
Amanda Leister, AZ
Jill Leistikow, IA
Brady Lewis, TN
TJ Lewis, TX
Tara Lindahl, KS
Angeana Little, ID
Mindi Luce, OK
Matthew Luensmann, TX
Austin Mapston, MT
Becky Marshall, WI
Joel McKie, GA
Matthew Myer, KY
Brandon Nelson, TX
Melissa Nussbaum, WA
Jeremy Ranck, PA
Johanna Robinson, NH
Holly Scuse, DE
Jon Sellenrick, NE
Brandon Souza, CA
Jarrod Smitherman, AL
Dana Staley, MO
Christine St. Pierre, CA
Chris Vessell, TN
Sorrell Vickers, FL
Marlene von Stein, OH
Julie Weathers, TX
Jonathon Willis, GA
Jenni Wilson, OH
Jacque Wright, WY

communications and public relations

We recommend:

FFA Brand

1. *Developing a standard template or program accessible through the website and eventually on a CD-ROM to create consistency yet maintain individuality. The templates may include stationary, programs, agendas, invitations and thank you notes.
2. Adding a byline to all National FFA Organization program trademarks and logos to establish the relationship between these programs and the National FFA Organization.
3. All publications that depict members in official dress use the official dress standards as defined in the Official FFA Manual.
4. All graphic images of any activity or members depicted in any publication shall be shown in a way that emphasizes the premier leadership, personal growth and career success that FFA has to offer.

Advanced Technology and the FFA

1. *Create a *New Horizons* magazine section with complete current and past articles and pictures as well as a search engine to look up specific topics/articles that have been previously published.
2. National FFA internet resources should provide tools for chapter development of web pages. By providing server space with html templates and more direct access (ftp) for more computer-oriented chapters, along with reasonable technical help. We can turn the internet into a tool for individual chapters.
3. In an effort to inform more chapters of changing information an e-mail sign up system should be created for chapters to receive e-mail alerts pertinent to them. (ie: deadlines, rule changes)
4. Create a section of the FFA homepage devoted to current agricultural issues which would be useful for research, interviews or public speaking purposes.
5. As there are a great number of forms and applications online that require input (applications) these should be in an easily edited format such as excel, in addition to a directly printable format, like acrobat.
6. Steps should continue to improve navigation within the site. Ideas include:
   a) Organization of re-direction pages to help chapters and states advertise web pages Format could include: www.ffa.org/statename and www.ffa.org/statename/chaptename
   b) A tab for state and chapter web links in addition to existing teachers, students and supporter tabs.
   c) Chapter locations displayed geographically (map with hyperlinks.)

Keeping Together-Membership After Graduation

1. *Send promotional packets to post-secondary education institutions that offer Agricultural Science and Natural Resource Curriculum on the ways and means to charter, develop and maintain a collegiate FFA chapter. These ways and means can include but are not limited to the utilization of assorted appropriate marketing strategies, available studies and statistics that effectively promote these programs.
2. Send information packets directly to FFA chapters pertaining to the retention and involvement of alumni, collegiate FFA, proficiencies, American Degrees, agricultural education, career preparation and officer opportunities.
3. Request email information through the FFA roster to improve communication with all members, especially graduated members.
4. Utilize internal FFA media such as *New Horizons*, the FFA website and emails to keep graduated FFA members informed of FFA opportunities after high school. Ideas can include personal stories, message boards, special issues and electronic newsletters to achieve this goal.
5. Have a letter from our national advisor/national officers be sent to individual states so they may use the letter to send to state degree recipients of opportunities such as alumni, collegiate FFA, proficiencies and American Degrees to encourage involvement past graduation.

Diamonds 75th Anniversary

1. *Make available on the national website and through the national organization press releases, newspaper inserts and public service announcements that focus on the history of the FFA and agriculture for chapter use in their local media.
2. Create a video to show at all state conventions show casing the 75 years of FFA including past convention highlights and a preview of the 75th convention.
3. Put out a special collectors edition of *New Horizons* completely devoted to the 75th Anniversary celebration and make it available to alumni sponsors.
4. Create a special pin to be worn throughout the year promoting the 75th Anniversary that will be made available to members alumni and sponsors.
5. Along with the Advisor's Planning Guide, send out a packet which includes promotional posters and guides for promoting the 75th Anniversary in local communities including access to and use of resources from the national organization.

Respectfully submitted:

Anne Knapke, OH (Chair)
Jamie Lile, MO (Vice-Chair)
Nikki Byrd, AL
Michelle Redmond, AR
Amanda Gilson, CA
Amanda Gipe, CA
Bryan Dodson, CA
David Brame, CA
Heidi Stearns, CT
Brandy Lee Reis, FL
Jordan Sims, FL
John Bramblett, GA
Angela Fredericks, IA
Clint Stevenson, ID
Rebecca Yandell, IL
Amir Faghih, IN
Holly Gilpin, KY
Susan Mitchell, KY
Whitney LeGrand, KY
Robyn Hunter, LA
Carrie Muller, MD
Jon LaPorte, MI
Karissa Ladlie, MN
Jason Davis, MO
Crystal Palmer, MS
Dylan Frazier, MT
Heidi Brandt, ND
Sarah Jorde, ND
Vicki Wray, NE
Brian Dalbow, NJ
Brittney Baldwin, OH
Gregory Black, OK
Nancy Potter, OK
Lance Bittner, PA
Amneris Rodriguez Vivella, PR
Eric Hill, SC
Kim Franken, SD
Lauren Mangrum, TN
Coy Baldwin, TX
Jessica Robinson, TX
Joe Bob Adkins, TX
Kandice Krenek, TX
Amanda Mann, VA
Rebecca Manning, VT
Justin Leighton, WA
Shane Westphal WI
Susan Wilkins, WV

FFA publications

We recommend:

General Magazine

1. *Add a "Current Agricultural Issues" section with one in-depth, informative topic per issue.
2. Omit the "What's Hot" section from the magazine and move to the website.
   a. Make survey available online.
   b. Publish accumulated results of "What's Hot" in the year end magazine.
3. Publish fewer feature articles and replace with a "State Scoop" section that will be divided into regions. Each region will begin with at least two states featured every issue.
4. Change theme of "FFA Faces" page each issue. Suggested themes include: outstanding proficiencies, leadership, CDEs, community service and national award winners.
5. Add a "Greenhand Corner" section to each issue to feature general FFA information and Star Greenhand stories.
6. Condense Table of Contents, and limit to one page per issue to make better use of space.
7. Add fun facts and general trivia about the FFA to the bottom of each page in the magazine, and also add an "FFA Embarrassing Moments" section to the "Last Laff" page.

Magazine Celebrates 75th Anniversary of FFA

1. *The six issues surrounding the 75th National Convention shall have several features.
   a. The six issues when put together will have 75 diamonds around the border, framing all six as one picture.
   b. Each issue's cover shall have a portion of a watermark in order that when put together the watermarks will form the FFA emblem.
2. The covers of the six magazines will be split in half between the past and present. Suggestions are: Leslie Applegate and current national president, old and new magazine cover, old members in black and white contrasted to new members in color.
3. Publish an article accompanied by various pictures, featuring a timeline of FFA history and future possibilities for the organization.
4. Feature an article in each of the six issues about past members and their present success or their contributions to the organization, for example: President Carter.
5. Work with other national publications, such as Time Magazine, to publish the anniversary of the FFA in order to reach a broader audience.

Local Program Success Guide

1. *Provide search engine on CD-ROM so that users can search for keywords and phrases. It should be user-friendly, easily accessible and very precise. Results should include multiple links.
2. Educate advisors, members, and state officers about the LPS Guide through an article in *New Horizons* and a small paragraph in the handbook and in the manual. Introduce LPS Guide to state officers at conferences and promote at agriculture teacher conventions.
3. Encourage curriculum about the LPS Guide at the college level, by providing curriculum to universities for the agricultural education classes.
4. Design a more appealing cover for the CD-ROM and include written user instructions and help notes within the case.

Manual and Handbook Evaluation (English and Spanish)

1. *Include optional officer ceremony parts in the manual. Some of the parts that should be added to both the written ceremony pages and the meeting room arrangement page include: the parliamentarian, chaplain and historian.
2. Clarify and specify official dress regulations in the manual. Issues to address include: nylon color and length of skirts for women. Include full visuals of official dress for both men and women in the FFA manual.
3. Explain "Supervised Agricultural Experience" in more depth in the manual. Under the "FFA OPPORTUNITIES" section, use examples of SAE and clarify on the subject.
4. Include national officer addresses and information on the inside of the back cover.
5. Include an index in the manual to provide easier use.
6. Improve use of space and quality of photos in the FFA handbook.
7. All revisions made in the English manual and handbook should follow as revisions in the Spanish versions.
8. Review Spanish creed, motto and mission statement. Adopt the English version into the Spanish editions.

Leadership & Personal Growth Committee

We Recommend:

State Officer Programs:

1. *Less repetition in curriculum of BLAST Off and NLCSO.
2. BLAST Off focuses more on intense personal training and team development.
3. BLAST Off includes more focus on speaking development and the introduction of workshops.
4. National FFA strongly encourages state officer representation from all associations at NLCSO.
5. NLCSO cover leadership techniques, examples of effective presentation and in-depth workshop training.

Collegiate FFA:

1. *Encourage administrative action in developing a mission statement, collegiate publications and incentives for collegiate members (ex. scholarships, conferences, programs and internships).
2. Increase opportunities for involvement at the state and national levels in career development events, (ex. job interview, public speaking, marketing, communications, teaching, web design and agricultural business – the agricultural business could be a comprehensive contest including agricultural business, agricultural economics, agricultural sales, etc.).
3. Provide a career fair at national convention that allows collegiate FFA members to network and interview with potential employers about internships and career possibilities.
4. Develop a national leadership conference and structured exchanges for collegiate FFA members.
5. Create a new national standardized community service project for collegiate FFA chapters.
6. Restructure membership requirements to include all agriculture majors and college students with active FFA membership even if not currently enrolled in an agriculture class.

National Conferences

1. *In EDGE, MFE and ALD, be sure to alter the presentation method of teaching and activities every other year so that they do not become repetitive.
2. More effectively teach presenters classroom management skills.
3. Integrate agricultural information in MFE, ALD and EDGE curriculum.
4. ALD can better prepare students for college or future careers by enhancing these characteristics: action and leadership, continuing improvement, social interaction, professional skills, technical and functional application and decision-making.
5. Open up communication between national presenters and state officers so that state officers are utilized effectively to conduct the conferences.

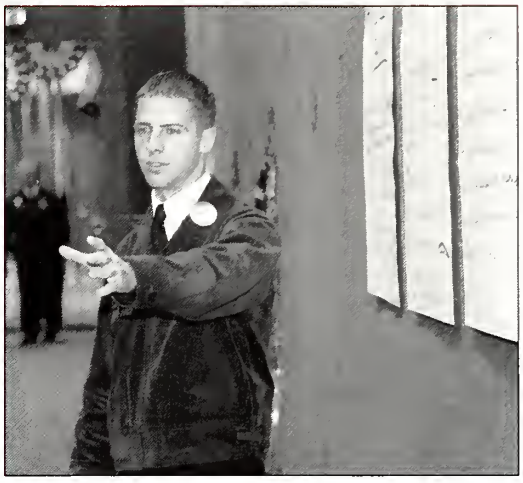
International Opportunities

1. *Include a poster insert in *New Horizons* advertising international opportunities in the FFA and encourage advisors to display them in class.
2. Incorporate international scope into career development event curriculum such as agricultural issues and agricultural sales.
3. Increase attendance and participation at the national FFA convention global village by providing information at convention registration.
4. Publish an article in *New Horizons* about ethnic tolerance and diversity.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jered P. Jones, OK (Chair)
Lucas Haag, NE (Vice-Chair)
Brian Dunn, MS
Tim Tefft, RI
Stacie Warner, IN
Leanna Becnel, LA
Cortney Peissig, WI
Kim Newsom, TN
Jeff Nelson, MN
Amanda Dight, IA
Lori Gilbert, GA
Cody Linville, IN
Dustin Spence, CA
Abby Evans, UT
Bill Cotton, AZ
Phil Blackman, NC
Danielle Conner, TN
Holli Turner, TN
Ashley Abele, TX
Jason Hayes, MO
Derrick Benton, KY
Heather Makarius, OH
Caela Paioff, FL
Marissa Hulsey, AL
Anne Marie Diener, CA
Lesley Close, CA
Tim Cassidy, WY
Doug Paasch, CA
Tara Wright, OK
Kisha Bodey, OH
Stormy Sparkman, TX
Tory Hodges, AR
Amanda Brown, PA
Aaron Spaid, VA
Stephanie Cleary, GA
Jennifer Carter, NC
Adam Buss, IL
Ginger Bushey, NY
Samantha Goss, AK
Melissa Copas, WI
Tate Rosenhusch, TX
Rochelle Strickland, TX
Tim Hammerich, CA
Joshua Shea, SC
Kim Schaff, ND
Jessica Ogburn, AL

Kelly Rogers



FFA members benefitted from several leadership workshops, many of which were facilitated by their peers.

Ed Zurga

The business conducted by delegates in Freedom Hall was a serious matter to members.

committee reports

marketing and merchandising

We recommend:

Pricing

1. * Monthly sales on select items to increase volume sold and create an incentive for members to purchase items.
2. Reduce prices on select clothing items to increase the volume sold and help promote the FFA.
   a. T-shirts
   b. Hats
   c. Sweatshirts
3. Decrease prices on:
   a. Balloons
   b. Stickers
   c. FFA week material
   d. Some winter apparel
4. Consider scaling back sales on embroidered polo shirts and trophies, because it is difficult to compete with local businesses.

Product Assortment

1. *Specifically target product creation for these groups:
   a. Active members
   b. Family of FFA members
   c. Alumni and supporters
   d. Advisor
2. Catalogs:
   a. Models need to wear official dress properly.
   b. Models need to follow code of ethics (behind front cover of the 2001 blue and gold catalogs).
   c. More attractive backgrounds in pictures that compliments the products.
   d. Use photos of members in Gold catalog.
   e. Have national officers model all clothing.
   f. Have catalog come out in December.
   g. Create officer section in catalog to include: workshop supplies, leadership books, clothing and accessories (in bulk) and kits.
3. New products:
   a. New hat styles: fitted hats, frayed visors
   b. Non-member/non-parent clothing
   c. Ski Apparel: parkas, gloves, hats, down vests, wind breakers
   d. Advisor apparel: t-shirts, dress shirts, ties
   e. More shorts: cheer shorts, basketball shorts (longer inseam)
   f. Franklin Covey planner accessories: covers with emblems
   g. Photo albums
   h. Large wooden podium emblems
   i. Collectors items: Barbie and Ken dolls in official dress (possibly incorporate 75th anniversary)
   j. Kits: officer kits, scrapbook kits, stationary kits, banquet kits
   k. FFA CDs with inspirational music and workshop music
4. Revisions:
   a. Official dress in magazine: better adjustment straps on jacket, change black pants from Wrangler Rugged wear to Wrangler Riata brand, change skirts to no pleats or pockets
   b. Officer station emblems (more similar to old station style)
   c. T-shirt color and quality
   d. Plaques, trophies and ribbons: better officer plaques, bigger state officer plaques, fancier degree plaques, update trophies and ribbons
   e. Sticker slogans and decals: more selection, and decals included with signs
   f. Blankets: larger emblems, personalization option
   g. Flags and banners: make outdoor versions available
   h. Class rings: more selection and detail
   i. Remove party camera
   j. Remove Wrangler jeans

Sales and Marketing

1. *Create official drop boxes to be used at state conventions where FFA members can fill out information cards that will be used to electronically market FFA products. Information would include:
   a. Name
   b. Chapter
   c. Level of membership and/or grade level
   d. E-mail address
2. Boxes would be returned by state associations to the national organization after the state convention.
3. Feature discount options in *New Horizons* magazine that can only be redeemed by ordering online.
4. Increase awareness of the FFA online store by sending out a mass e-mail with a direct link to the online store with a featured item of the month being displayed on the front page.
5. Revise the link connecting the FFA homepage to the online store by making it larger and more eye appealing, with changing FFA images and/or messages.

Promotional Opportunities

1. *Implement a national fund raising program using FFA merchandise that would include a high selling chapter incentive program.
2. Place a business reply card for an FFA merchandise catalog in *New Horizons* once a year.
3. Have a fashion show of FFA merchandise displayed at national convention.
4. Provide a CD or VHS to each state for the promotion of FFA merchandise that could be created by an agricultural communication department at a university to cut down cost to the FFA.
5. Utilize a national radio campaign to promote the FFA merchandise website.
6. Consider discount for state associations for promotional advertising purposes.

Respectfully submitted:

Tanya Hadley, IN (Chair)
Mike Folin, OR (Vice-Chair)
Christopher Randolph, AL
Craig Dewey, AR
Dusty Key, AR
Todd Rovey, AZ
Jen Arnall, CA
Dennis Blackman, CA
Molly Fagundes, CA
Leeman Parker, CA
Becky Roland, CA
Ellie McKenzie, FL
Amanda Thomas, FL
Denise Haynes, GA
Catrina Kennedy, GA
Holly Apperson, IA
Tammy DeCounter, IL
Drew DeRiemacker, IL
Jesse Faber, IL
Tiffany Brammell, KY
Bill Riley, KY
Samantha Bell, LA
Ashley Fox, MD
Kendra Butters, MI
Glen Groth, MN
Ben Marshall, MO
David Busby, MS
Jordan Knudsen, MT
Jessica Walters, NC
Chelsea Balzano, NM
Kevin Fath, OH
Shari Moffett, OH
Beth Robinson, OK
Bill Shelby, OK
Lisa Fetscher, PA
Landon Loveall, TN
Jason Wallace, TN
Brooke Bounds, TX
Brian Bursey,TX
Raymond Earwood, TX
Brian Frazee, TX
Natalie Wolff, TX
Carly Tilson, VA
Diana Heller, WI
Jeni Reese, WI
Jeremy Kisling, WY

Wales Hunter

Members interacted with industry representatives during a dinner function. The relationship of members to partners, such as business and industry, are vital to the success of the chapter.

Respectfully submitted:

Seanne Culver, NV (Chair)
Mary Ellen Blackwood, AL
Caroline Carpenter, AR
Mark Aguiar, CA
Carmen Cervantes, CA
John Diaz, CA
Julie Kondoff, CA
Ryan Cummings, CA
Tyler Knott, CO
Jimmy Powell, DE
Heather Barton, FL
Brandon Giddens, GA
Jamie Dodd, GA
Cassie Bishop, ID
Andrew Birchen, IL
Jason Clapp, IN
Keith Bryant, KS
Jennifer Welch, KY
Julia Kennedy, MA
Kevin Bell, MA
Mallory Koglin, MI

committee reports

partner development

We recommend:

Teacher Involvement

1. *Help states develop a program of standards and recognition for teachers in their states based on their involvement in partner development.
2. Develop materials to help teacher educators inform their students about partner development.
3. Include information on partner development in *Making a Difference* and *New Horizons*.
4. Develop a template to allow chapters to produce a partner development brochure to distribute to potential partners.

Member Involvement

1. *Utilize *New Horizons* and other agricultural publications to include partnership articles, spotlights, "How To" lists, member/sponsor spotlight contests, etc.
2. Expand the partner link on ffa.org to include articles, spotlights, write-in contests and "Get Connected" information.
3. Create partner development videos for advisor and member use.

Awareness

1. *Inform and broaden the knowledge of FFA members and advisors about the importance of partnerships by highlighting successful partnerships in *New Horizons* and by expanding the partnership section on the National FFA website to include specific success stories and/or ideas.
2. Increase awareness in already established agricultural organizations (i.e. Farm Bureau and Agriculture in the Classroom) by strengthening relationships and FFA knowledge to help eliminate FFA stereotypes that potential partners and FFA members might have.
3. Convey to partners the importance of their support of the FFA by strengthening current practices (i.e. inviting partners to conventions, including partners as judges, putting partner contacts on information packets).

Matt Fox, MO
Jessica Lehenbauer, MO
Brad Lowery, MS
Andrea Houston, NC
Shauna Dorman, NC
Amy Rasmussen, NE
Joshua D'Agnese, NH
Quentin Ray, NM
Veronica Goodman, NY
Lucy Bowen, OH
Kristi Sumpter, OK
Gina Higley, OR
Karrie Kehr, PA
Ashley Granata, SC
Rachael Klamer, TN
Ben Frazier, TX
Cody Gladney, TX
Jordan Gilbreath, TX
Ross Oliver, TX
Jaclyn Roller, VA
Damaso Rivera, VI
Becky Wallace, WA
Kory Duerst, WI
Amber Somerville, WV

national FFA convention

We Recommend:

Expanding the Influence

1. *Expand coverage of convention by utilizing media tools.
   a. Create promotional videos that will be provided to state associations free of charge and to be played at their state conventions.
   b. Make all convention videos more accessible to members and advisors.
2. Utilize *New Horizons* to better publicize the activities in and around national convention.
   a. Have a larger section in the pre-convention magazine about national convention.
   b. Have a pre-convention students guide entitled "20 cool things happening at national convention" or "20 things I wish I would have known about convention."
3. Allow more students input during and after convention by having an online student survey and have national officers promote the survey throughout convention.
   a. Similar to e-mail stations, have computer booths available for members to take a survey about convention.
   b. Use the FFA discussion board and have a "National Convention comments/suggestions/ideas" section where other students can read their comments.
4. Provide more educational activities.
   a. Provide, if necessary, an overflow room (ex. Broadbent) for students who wish to take part in convention, but sessions and workshops are full.
   b. Have a guest or motivational speaker or leadership workshop for all students in the room.
5. Assist the audience's ability to share the convention by providing tools and ideas to take back to chapters.
   a. Provide each chapter advisor with press releases when registering.
   b. National officers encourage members during sessions to take back the excitement from convention to their chapters and talk to community leaders and FFA supporters.

Respectfully submitted:

Erik Blaser, WI (Chair)
Johnathon Walsh, NM (Vice-Chair)
Thomas Hall, AL
Holly Willardson, AK
Matt Fryar, AR
Justin Jett, AR
Chris Ide, CA
Lindsay Maddox, CA
Gabriel Ponce, CA
Brian Toledo, CA
James H. Baxter IV, DE
Chad Lyons, FL

committee reports

Attendance and Participation

1. *Promote the national convention through visual technology.
2. National Travel Research Committee to research cost efficient travel and lodging.
   a. National FFA work with airlines to communicate the potential and quantity in hope of receiving discount rates.
3. National FFA set up a specific web page telling chapters how to get more students to convention. (Ex: fundraising, local or state travel groups and message boards).
4. Display a large, daily schedule in the main hall.
5. Convention efficiency and accommodation issues:
   a. Pre-convention mixer or dance for delegates, national officer candidates, as well as band, chorus and talent members.
   b. Provide a greater number of tables in the food court areas and benches in the mall.
   c. Discounted or complimentary registration for talent participants due to their services throughout convention.
   d. On the delegate floor, more than one yellow card signifying state shall be provided if the state has a large amount of delegates for smoother delegate operation.
   e. Provide a hospitality room for delegates throughout convention along with discounted meal tickets for delegates.

The Educational Experience

1. *Promote career success by establishing an information booth at a central location in the career show, enabling members to acquire guidance and information about interest areas. This booth will:
   a. Utilize an evaluation form to provide National FFA with a better understanding for where the majority of the membership interests lie.
   b. Implement a scavenger hunt with possible incentives to encourage members to explore the career show and broaden their horizons.
2. Better equip members and teachers to take advantage of the educational opportunities available in FFA by broadcasting workshops on the large projection screen in the food court, therefore allowing more members to experience the benefits of the workshops and encourage participation in them.
3. Encourage the host city and the National FFA Organization to work together and provide members (especially those lacking means of transportation) with buses to allow them to participate in educational tours, thereby enhancing their convention experience.
4. Better inform members about educational experiences, such as workshops and tours, by having talent acts who perform in the food court announce times, locations, etc of the various educational opportunities.

Attendee Conduct Subcommittee

1. *The national officer team presents an enrichment training program to all delegates to inform them of their duties and expectations as representatives and role models of national convention attendees. They will explain how important it is to work directly with chapter members from their states to encourage correct use of official dress and proper behavior at national convention.
2. The national officer team sends letters to members and advisors outlining expectations concerning official dress, conduct and enthusiasm while attending national convention. A copy of this letter will be printed in *New Horizons* and on the National FFA website.
3. To encourage a heightened sense of professionalism, the description of proper official dress will be reviewed and clarified. Examples:
   a. Length of skirts
   b. Material of all pants and skirts
   c. Hats
   d. Shoes
4. To ensure security of the convention assembly, when guests register, they will receive a specially designed guest pin to allow them access to the convention.
5. To encourage proper conduct of national convention attendees, the National FFA will design the following:
   a. Posters to be hung at national convention that promote correct official dress and behavior.
   b. Pre-session videos outlining proper conduct.
6. Ads in *New Horizons* that properly display the ideals of the National FFA Organization.

Caci Cook, GA
John Riley Thornton, GA
Mike Roach, IL
Jake Wilkins, IN
Blake Brockway, IA
Rachel Richardson, KY
Ryan Quarles, KY
Nicki Johnson, LA
Michael Ireland, ME
Todd Wolff, MI
Ida Matthys, MN
Renea Honeycutt, MO
Lindsay Thornton, NC
Lindsey Calhoun, OH
Mindy Dye, OH
Luke Ryan, OH
Jeremy Cowley, OK
Daniel Mosburg, OK
Brian Kitamura, OR
Adam Ramos, PR
Ismael Badillo Vargas, PR
Josh Hehr, SD
Lavyne Wieting, SD
Hannah Collier, TN
Keaton Askew, TX
Kymberly Edds, TX
Erin Frazier, TX
Casey Hogan, TX
Chad M. Brooks, VA
Dan Tedor, WA
Andrea Hunt, WV
Leslie Shuler, WI

membership recruitment and participation

We recommend:

Member Benefits

1. *Use distance-learning technology to communicate FFA benefits. Possible illustrations:
   a. National convention
   b. National officer retiring addresses
   c. Other conferences
2. Publish a brochure promoting the benefits of FFA membership. Areas of focus:
   a. Parents (regarding long-term benefits)
   b. Middle school opportunities
   c. High school (scholarships, contacts, job opportunities)
3. Evaluate the benefits of CDEs to meet the needs of agricultural, foods and natural resource industries.
4. Incorporate the use of personal FFA member experiences in the FFA publications (i.e. website and FFA handbook).

Member Participation

1. *Designated a page in *New Horizons* to present ideas to chapters for community service projects. Possibilities include:
   a. Written and online form for idea contribution
2. Update promotional videos.
3. Use promotional videos to inform new members of state activities which are under ten minutes and regularly updated. Content to include:
   a. Convention highlights
   b. Leadership opportunities
   c. Diversification
   d. Sponsorships
5. Use newsletters and workshops to inform faculty members of FFA. Content to include:
   a. Success statistics
   b. Career outlook opportunities

Non-Traditional Students

1. *Include diversity-training programs designed to educate state officers as part of an existing program such as BLAST Off, NLCSO, SPC.
2. Provide diversity training and material for all agriculture teachers. Could be implemented through the Local Program Success.
3. Develop an educational campaign targeting the general public about diversity in the FFA. Could be accomplished by:
   a. Public Service Announcements
   b. Television Commercials
   c. Posters featuring Famous Past FFA Members
4. Provide educational brochures to school administrators.

Why Students Enrolled In Agricultural Education Do Not Join FFA

1. *Conduct research to determine why students enrolled in agricultural education do not join the FFA.
2. Enhance and distribute a recruitment packet which contains traditional and non-traditional information targeted at recruiting non-FFA students enrolled in agriculture classes. This would possibly include:
   a. art/music
   b. technology
   c. soundtrack of National FFA theme music
   d. training on how to recruit
3. Provide and distribute more extensive and in depth public relations materials such as brochures, television commercials, magazine articles, radio, etc. to change misconceptions and increase awareness among parents, guardians and community officials.
4. Include membership recruitment training material for NLSCO participants.

Respectfully submitted:

Jason Suydam, ND (Chair)
Codi Montes, NM (Vice-Chair)
Amy Alverson, AL
Diann Andre, WI
Kyle Bloom, IA
Nioka Brewer, TN
Justin Bunch, TX
Dustie Butner, OK
Kyle Chandler, LA
Heather Cutchin, NC
Theresa Dewey, NY
Patty Edwards, TX
Dene' Elliott, MI
Tiffany Ferguson, UT
Briana Frankiewich, CA
Stephanie Franzen, TX
Hobson Fulcher Jr., SC
Jonie Garwood, NE
Lindsey George, KS
Holly Goodman, AZ
Mindy Haymaker, VA
Mindy Henney, OH
Cody Holden, PA
Kristi Holum, WY
Jill Kelley, VT
Derek Light, IL
Crystal Matthews, MO
Dane McDougal, VI
Christopher Nnadi, NJ
Heather Noll, OH
James Nutt, AR
Tawna Paine, WA
Nicolina Prestininzi, CA
Steve Prinkey, WV
Jordan Provost, TX
Elizabeth Ramirez, FL
Sammy Ramirez, CA
Jonathan Snow, DE
Jodee Stellina, CA
Trisha Stephens, GA
Julie Surralt, IL
Mallory Tarr, IN
Karin Tesmer, MN
Andy Traylor, TX
Cody Tutwiler, OK
Martin Vito, CT
Monique Waterman, CA
Danny Wilkins, AZ

Patti Longmire

FFA members were able to have fun and celebrate success during convention.

Ed Zurga

More than 400 delegates benefited from an experiential training session sponsored by Cargill before they got down to business on Monday morning. This year's training revolved around a "Kentucky Jones" theme—a relative of the more popular "Indiana Jones."

program of activities

We recommend:

1. Two delegates representing the Program of Activities committee along with two delegate coordinators join the task force to continue enhancing the delegate process.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jason Suydam, ND (Chair)
Jesse Ulrich, IA (Vice-Chair)
Erik Blaser, WI
Seanne Culver, NV
Colleen Dickinson, IL
Tanya Hadley, IN
Jered Jones, OK
Anne Knapke, OH
Casey Smith, OK
Kurtis Thomas, TX

committee reports

committee reports

Wales Hunter

FFA members purchased glow wands before each convention session, and the proceeds from the sales directly benefited the New York Fire and Police Widows' and Children's Fund. During the final convention session, a check in the amount of $23,971.33 was presented to local police and firefighters.

Cindy Stucky

These nine members spent countless hours determining the new national officer team.

auditing

Auditing:

The auditing committee met with Marion Fletcher, National FFA Treasurer. The committee members reviewed the draft audit and Mr. Fletcher answered any questions that arose. The audit is being completed using generally accepted accounting procedures. It was stated that the final audit would be available in several months. The impact of the stock market on the assets of the National FFA Organization was also discussed.

The committee makes no recommendations.

Respectfully submitted:

Lucas Haag, NE (Chair)
Erica Coble, MO
Jack Anderson, SD
Jamie Lile, MO
Mike Folin, OR
Codi Montes, NM
Johnathan, Walsh, NM

nominating

We, the nominating committee, have given careful and deliberate consideration to all applicants running for a national office. The committee nominates the following slate of candidates to the delegates at the 74th National FFA Convention to serve as national officers for the year 2001-2002.

Vice President Central Region: Amber Haugland, Ambrose, North Dakota

Vice President Eastern Region: Elio Chiarelli, Jr., McDonald, Pennsylvania

Vice President Southern Region: Barrett Keene, Plant City, Florida

Vice President Western Region: Abbie Kammerzell, Colfax, Washington

National Secretary: Robin Niehaus, Hillsboro, Illinois

National President: Dane White, Eureka, California

Respectfully submitted:
Seth Broesder, Montana (Chair)
Andy Osten, Nebraska (Vice-Chair)
Brian Cunningham, Colorado
Micah Hansen, South Dakota
Paul Hostetter, Pennsylvania
Alyson Johnson, Alabama
Kim Newsom, Tennessee
Kim Russell, North Carolina
Jacob Wenger, California

2001-2002 national FFA officer team

Dane White
President
2514 G Street
Eureka, CA 95501
Voicemail: (317)-802-4341
E-mail: dwhite@ffa.org
Age: 20
Chapter: Eureka FFA Chapter
Enterprise: dairy cattle production and dairy work experience
FFA Awards: extemporaneous speaking, star chapter farmer, national convention delegate, regional dairy proficiency winner, DeKalb Award
College and Major: California State Polytechnic University, freshman, agricultural education
Career Goal: agriculture teacher

Robin Niehaus
Secretary
P.O. Box 446
Hillsboro, IL 62049
Voicemail: (317)-802-4346
E-mail: rniehaus@ffa.org
Age: 20
Chapter: Hillsboro FFA Chapter
Enterprise: agricultural communications, diversified crop placement, fruit and vegetable production
FFA Awards: national finalist in agricultural communications, DeKalb Award, National FFA Chorus
College and Major: Iowa State University, sophomore, agricultural business and communications
Career Goal: public relations

Elio Chiarelli, Jr.
Eastern Region Vice President
28 Chiarelli Lane
McDonald, PA 15057
Voicemail: (317)-802-4343
E-mail: echiarelli@ffa.org
Age: 20
Chapter: H.G. Parkinson FFA Chapter
Enterprise: commercial vegetable production, sheep finishing, poultry
FFA Awards: first place in national prepared public speaking; state star in poultry, fruit and vegetable categories; national silver placement in parliamentary procedure
College and Major: Pennsylvania State University, sophomore, agricultural and extension education; environmental science
Career Goal: agriculture teacher in an urban setting

Amber Haugland
Central Region Vice President
12520 104th Street NW
Ambrose, ND 58833
Voicemail: (317)-802-4342
E-mail: ahaugland@ffa.org
Age: 19
Chapter: Divide County FFA Chapter
Enterprise: beef and sheep production and showmanship, agricultural sales and service
FFA Awards: state star farmer, state proficiency winner in diversified agricultural production, state proficiency winner in agricultural sales and service
College and Major: North Dakota State University, sophomore, agricultural education
Career Goal: agriculture teacher and farming

Barrett Keene
Southern Region Vice President
6409 Varn Road
Plant City, FL 33565
Voicemail: (317) 802-4344
E-mail: bkeene@ffa.org
Age: 21
Chapter: Plant City FFA Chapter
Enterprise: home and community development, beef production, feeder steer production
FFA Awards: first place in national extemporaneous speaking, national H.O. Sargent award, state winner in ornamental horticulture, first place in forestry
College and Major: University of Florida, junior, agricultural education
Career Goal: agriculture teacher

Abbie Kammerzell
Western Region Vice President
3202 McNeilly Road
Colfax, WA 99111
Voicemail: (317)-802-4345
E-mail: akammerzell@ffa.org
Age: 20
Chapter: Colfax FFA Chapter
Enterprise: equine science, outdoor recreation
FFA Awards: second place in national prepared public speaking, gold emblem in national parliamentary procedure, Star Greenhand award
College and Major: Washington State University, sophomore, agricultural communications
Career Goal: public relations

Looavull.
Luhvul.
Lewisville.
Looaville.
Looeyville.

Greater Louisville

YOUR KIND OF PLACE

ANY WAY YOU SAY IT

The 2001 National FFA Convention PROCEEDINGS was printed by

publishers press
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as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

National FFA Convention Dates 2002-2005

October 30-November 2, 2002
October 29-November 1, 2003
October 27-30, 2004
October 26-29, 2005

The National FFA Organization affirms its belief in the value of all human beings and seeks diversity in its membership, leadership and staff. The National FFA organization is a resource and support organization that does not select, control, or supervise state association, local chapter or individual member activities except as expressly provided for in the National FFA Constitution and By Laws.

FFA Mission

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth and career success** through agricultural education.

The Agricultural Education Mission

Agricultural Education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

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