Leadership is a puzzle... Solve It!
Important Dates

January
4 Star Candidate Interviews
8 Regional Degree Scoring

February
1 Chapter Applications due to State Office
2-3 District Leadership Contests
10 Regional Level State Officer Interviews
16-17 Regional Leadership Contests
19-21 State Level State Officer Interviews
Did you know...

1. Production agriculture actually peaked in the United States in 1935, with a recorded 6.3 million farms.
2. Elsie, Michigan is the home of the world's largest registered Holstein dairy herd.
3. Michigan State University was the first institution of higher learning in the nation to teach scientific agriculture.

When President Kennedy declared his war on idleness with the simple declaration of, “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country,” a nation embraced the idea of service. While doing so, a generation realized that they were not only helping to ensure the growth of their fellow man but also the personal growth of themselves.

Personal growth is one of the most valuable themes in the FFA Mission Statement. However, personal growth isn’t easily defined nor does the process ever end. The continuation of personal growth development lasts beyond the day we lose our earthly ties and spurs others to achieve levels of growth unseen. It is this notion of serving others that runs deep in the FFA and the personal growth of its members.

The feeling one takes away from assisting others and possibly changing a day of their lives is remarkable. The act can be as complex as assisting in building a home for Habitat for Humanity or as simple as shoveling the sidewalks of an elderly neighbor.

With these acts, the performer, too, is being served as he or she develops as a member of humanity. Fellow FFA members, we challenge you to proceed with your never-ending process of personal growth through the avenue of service. In doing so, there is no telling how far we can advance as a country and as a people.

Personal Growth through Service

I believe in...
What is the first thing we think of when we hear the words “community service?”

For some, community service is a large part of their lives, and they take great pride in the work they do. For others, community service is just another necessary task, and no matter how many times they groan or roll their eyes, it will still be there, waiting for them.

Whether or not we truly enjoy community service, all can agree that it is a necessary component of our society. Even just a small amount of generosity within our communities can go a long way.

Our generation is one of the most active groups of young people America has seen in decades. This can be attributed to many factors, including the encouragement of the media, both private and government organizations and the popularity of service learning curriculum within schools.

Community service and volunteerism are encouraged today by surprising media outlets: music television stations, networks such as MTV and VH1 have spent millions of dollars and many long hours to launch campaigns such as Save the Music, Know HIV/AIDS and Choose or Lose (Rock the Vote) to encourage young people to become involved in local, state and national issues.

Additionally, the government has made efforts to encourage community service through the creation of the President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation. Through this council, the USA Freedom Corps was born. The USA Freedom Corps is composed of national service programs such as AmeriCorps, Citizen Corps, Learn & Serve America, Peace Corps and Senior Corps. Their goals are to protect our homeland, support our communities and extend the idea of American compassion throughout the world.

Another organization, YouthNOISE, encourages young people to become involved in their communities through service, voting and lobbying. It strives to mobilize and encourage youth and educate them on issues affecting their lives. YouthNOISE also allows young people to interact with one another, share ideas and debate issues facing America through message boards on the organization’s website.

Throughout the 1990s, the concept of service education was introduced and quickly became popular. Service education can be broken down into two main ideas or themes.

The first idea describes service learning as more of a philosophy or attitude toward education. It states that education should help students to increase their social responsibilities and encourage them to become positive, active citizens within their communities.

The second idea considers a method of teaching, which incorporates community service activities within the regular academic curriculum. This method of teaching provides students with hands-on service experiences, in turn raising community awareness and compassion.

Overall, these organizations and practices are driven forward by one purpose: to encourage and motivate the public. We are the next generation and we have the ability to be a positive, driving force toward an even brighter tomorrow.

Now is the time to become involved. Michigan FFA members! Community service exists in many shapes and forms, and anyone has the ability to make a difference.

If there is a need or a change you want to see in your community, you can be the person to see it through!

By: Tiffany Reeser
James Madison College

Lend a Hand,
Help Out,
Make a Difference!!!

To Learn More...
About VH1’s Save the Music and Know HIV/AIDS Campaign: www.vh1.com
Regarding MTV’s Choose or Loose Campaign: www.mtv.com/chooseorloose
About USA Freedom Corps and its many national service projects, please visit www.usafreedomcorps.com
YouthNOISE: www.youthnoise.com
As the 77th National FFA Convention concluded, it was clear that the Michigan FFA had held true to its theme for the year to Kick It Up A Notch.

A highlight of the convention occurred when the Byron FFA Chapter was named the Model of Innovation in Chapter Development, recognizing the fact that the chapter has actively pursued the mission and strategies of the FFA organization.

With an incredibly active membership of 127 members, advisors Tate Forbush and Emily Opper were, to say the least, excited when the winner was announced. Forbush remarked, “We were all very shocked that we won. We didn’t expect it at all even though the kids worked so hard. We’re still shocked after all this time has passed.”

The members of the chapter did work incredibly hard and diligently to earn this award. Selling more than $6,500 in fruit and nut sales and planting vegetables in cooperation with the Flint Urban Garden Corporation to help 75 urban families were just a few of their numerous accomplishments.

The chapter also worked in conjunction with the Roosevelt and Oakland SE FFA Chapters to hold a chapter exchange program to give their members a feel of urban agriculture.

In addition to all this, the chapter raised their membership by an incredible six percent.

Former state officer and member of the Springport FFA Chapter, Jeremy Glaspie, was recognized as the American Star in Agriscience. Currently a student at the University of Arizona, Glaspie began his agricultural endeavors in high school when he became manager of the school’s greenhouse. As a student at Michigan State University, Jeremy was also employed as an undergraduate in the Department of Plant Pathology.

Also during convention, Aaron Preston, who is currently a student at Michigan State University and serving as the State Treasurer, won the National Prepared Public Speaking Career Development Event. With a speech on Country of Origin Labeling, Aaron said, “I was so ecstatic that the entire time they were announcing my name, I was in some sort of a fog. It was an incredible experience.”

As convention closed, members left with memories of an amazing convention and the people that made it so incredible — the members we met from all fifty states. Congratulations to all who participated at the 77th National FFA Convention and thank them for continuing to Kick It Up A Notch.

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Also Recognized

Receiving Gold
- Branch Area Career Center - Agricultural Sales
- Laker - Agronomy
- Lapeer County Vo-Tech - Floriculture
- Centreville - Parliamentary Procedure

Receiving Silver
- Fremont - Agricultural Communications
- Breckenridge - Agricultural Issues Forum
- Lapeer County Vo-Tech - Agricultural Mechanics
- Greta Koebel, River Valley - Dairy Cattle Handlers
- Johnny Vehaar, Laker - Extemp Public Speaking
- Perry-Morros - Farm Business Management
- Mason - Forestry
- Lowell - Horse Evaluation
- Julie Thalen, Saline - Job Interview
- Sanilac Career Center - Livestock Evaluation
- Laker - Poultry Evaluation

Receiving Bronze
- Courtney Neubauer, Montague - Creed Speaking
- Lowell - Dairy Cattle Evaluation
- Corunna - Dairy Foods
- Laker - Environmental/Natural Resources
- Perry-Morros - Food Science and Technology
- Lowell - Marketing Plan
- Bronson - Meats Evaluation and Technology
- Lapeer County Vo-Tech - Nursery and Landscape

National Proficiency Award Finalists
- Nathan Baker, Waldron - Diversified Crop Production Entrepreneurship
- C. Pete Bush, St. Louis - Diversified Agricultural Production
- Bradlee Butters, Homer - Agricultural Sciences
- Rebecca This, Dansville - Vegetable Production

For a complete wrap-up of the 77th National FFA Convention, please visit: www.ffa.org
Our Supported by the State of Michigan Office of Career and Technical Preparation

By: Victoria Holmes Journalism

Students at Oakland Schools Technical Southwest campus have been hard at work since the beginning of the school year. These high school students from all over Oakland County travel to Wixom daily, learning what life in the real world is like. "Being able to learn hands-on in the working field is much more interesting than traditional class work," Lakeland High School senior Ben Russell said. Russell is one of several students who are currently working on a campus beautification project.

As a part of their agiscience and natural resources curriculum, the students are creating a common area for their fellow classmates. Once complete, this area will serve as a place for the students to hang out in a relaxing setting of which they can be proud.

This common area is being completed by students in the floral, landscape technology and heavy equipment classes. They have been working since school started in August to build a bridge, a brick paved seating area and a garden.

Corey Armstrong, a senior at South Lyon High School said the students hope they can complete the project by early 2005, as he rearranged boulders in the student-built waterfall. While the remodeling of the common area is by far the largest project occupying the time of Oakland Tech SW students, they are also learning several other skills in many different work environments.

The floral retail students are completing pumpkin corsages and preparing for the holiday season. These students run a floral shop where their customers include community residents, local schools and even wedding parties. "I love the competition of making the floral arrangements and the feeling of pride after I know I have completed a project," said Novi High School senior Christina Martinez.

The floral and landscaping students also work in the small animal laboratory, the greenhouse and a garden center in the spring. All of the courses are part of the two-year program intended to prepare students for future careers in areas involving science and technology. These students will definitely leave high school experienced and ready to take on the world.

Food Scientist

Food scientists preserve our food supply by assuring its flavor, color, texture, nutritional quality and safety. They use their knowledge of chemistry, biochemistry, microbiology and engineering to convert grain, livestock, fruit and vegetables into new food products.

In high school, take mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics and computer science. Communications courses are also important. While in college, one should work for a bachelor's degree in food science.

For more information, check out: www.msu.edu/unit/fshn/
When Emily Wenzlick of the New Lothrop FFA Chapter is not busy at school keeping stats for the wrestling team or doing everything possible in the FFA, she is at home working on her SAE projects.

Somewhat of an SAE connoisseur, Emily is heavily involved in beef, sheep and forage production. She has been showing steers at the Shiawassee County Fair since she was in third grade. Showing steers became her main SAE when she joined FFA in the eighth grade. She has continued to expand her operation to include sheep for a year.

Emily raises her animals on her family’s farm where her brother and sister also maintain their projects. She helps her dad bail hay and straw in the summer, using it to feed their animals. She helps with other projects around the farm throughout the year, including an addition to a barn and cutting firewood that her family sells in the community.

Emily is also incredibly active in the New Lothrop FFA chapter. She is currently a junior and serves as the chapter’s reporter. Emily was on the Junior High Conduct of Meetings team and the state winning Greenhand Conduct of Meetings team. She participates in numerous chapter fundraisers including nut and cookie dough sales and the New Lothrop FFA labor auction. She has worked hard with building the chapter’s new greenhouse.

Emily and her family have hosted the annual chapter skeet shoot at their home for the past five years. Emily is in charge of scoring, collecting and awarding all of the prizes for the skeet shoot. Emily is always willing to do anything possible to help her chapter. She enjoys working on FFA activities with other members, helping them to do their best.

When Emily finishes high school, she wants to attend either Michigan State University or Central Michigan University to major in education. Eventually, she wants to obtain a job teaching younger children.

Science writers must fit their writing styles to suit a variety of materials and audiences. They write news stories, manuals and press releases for non-profit and for-profit corporations. Their main job is to describe science without using scientific terms. In high school, you might write or edit your school newspaper and participate in science fairs or out-of-school science and technology programs. In college, an undergraduate major such as biological science combined with a minor in English or communications is good preparation. For more information, check out: www.anrecs.msu.edu
“Do not follow where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

As an agriscience teacher at Montague High School, Mr. Keith Griffin - “Griff” - was an inspiration to countless students throughout his years of teaching. Mr. Griffin was also an active Farm Bureau member, a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, a father and a husband. Most importantly, he tackled all of his activities with a great zeal for life. He displayed an encouraging smile for every person he came in contact with and was notorious for having a funny story readily available.

To Mr. Griffin, the students were the heart of the FFA program. He encouraged every student to participate, no matter their age, ability or gender. In fact, he allowed women to join the Montague FFA in 1968, one year before they were formally admitted into the national organization.

Mr. Griffin visited students on their farms and at their homes, encouraging them to become involved with the FFA and take advantage of the opportunities offered to them. He was responsible for the creation of historical markers for the Montague area as well as a map of the markers for the bicentennial celebration in 1976.

A farmer at heart, Mr. Griffin loved the FFA and fought to keep it alive at Montague High School. He often butted heads with a school board set on dissolving the chapter, citing that the “FFA is an intra-curricular activity.” Mr. Griffin also demonstrated the success of his students at the local, state and national levels.

Mr. Griffin is remembered by all as a man who quietly aided anyone in need. He is remembered by all for his selfless gifts of time and energy, throwing himself wholeheartedly into every service project.

His advice to FFA members today would be to work hard for what you want to accomplish - whatever you put into something is what you’ll get out. “Griff” will always be remembered as a man passionate about life, constantly touching the lives of those around him.

Although Mr. Griffin passed away on October 29, 2004, he will always be remembered. His legacy of service continues as a scholarship fund was set up in his honor for the Montague FFA. He will never be forgotten.

Biochemists explore the chemical events that cause biological phenomena in living organisms. The knowledge that biochemists gain in their research provides a basic understanding of the marvelous workings of the vast array of life forms.

In high school, take at least four years of laboratory science (including biology, chemistry and physics), four years of mathematics (at least through pre-calculus) and four years of English.

For an entry-level position as a biochemist, you need a bachelor’s degree in biochemistry. Your college courses will include biochemistry, chemistry (general, analytical, organic, and physical), biology, genetics, calculus and physics.

For more information, check out: www.bch.msu.edu/
Living to Serve

By: Doug Albright
State Reporter

The FFA motto embodies the purpose of our organization. Members of the Blissfield FFA Chapter are Kicking it Up a Notch and living to serve with their participation in Operation Christmas Child.

Operation Christmas Child is a national program founded by Reverend Billy Graham’s son, Franklin. In 2003, Operation Christmas Child collected more than 6.6 million shoeboxes and distributed them in 95 countries.

This is the first year that Blissfield has participated in Operation Christmas Child, yet they have emulated what living to serve is all about for years.

They have completed many service projects, such as working with Michigan Farm Bureau in Traverse City schools. During Farm Bureau’s state annual meeting, Blissfield FFA members work with Farm Bureau members to teach students about Michigan agriculture and what it has to offer.

They started Operation Christmas Child as a class community service project, yet they soon realized that the entire school wanted to participate. Blissfield, a school with approximately 450 students, and the chapter had a great response from the entire student body.

Wrapped shoeboxes are the “presents.” There are four age ranges to choose from when packing the shoeboxes. Students can pick an entire box or just a single item. The class then gathers the items and creates boxes that fit the age ranges. The ranges are 2-4, 5-8, 9-12 and early teen.

In high school, take mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics and computer science. Communication courses are also important. In college, you can major in soil science, water resources, meteorology or environmental economics and policy.

For more information, go to: www.environment.msu.edu/
Region 1:
Dhani Tobias
Maple Valley

Following in the footsteps of her father and older sister, Dhani Tobias of the Maple Valley FFA Chapter originally joined the organization because of the opportunity to learn more about agriculture and livestock which she holds as one of her many interests.

A junior in high school and secretary of her chapter, Dhani began her SAE project of raising, breeding and showing beef cattle last year in her Natural Resources class. She shows at the Barry County Fair, the MSU Winter Beef Show and the State Fair. To make it to these shows, she has a daily routine that consists of feeding and watering her cattle and when show times are approaching, she also washes, blow-dries, combs and leads them around for practice. She was also appointed to be “the nurse” by her father because of her tendency to care for the pregnant cattle and give them their shots.

Besides the FFA, Dhani is also involved with cross-country, track, competitive cheerleading, weightlifting, the National Honor Society, student council and the Equestrian team.

Dhani would like to attend Michigan State University to study teaching or radiology and would like to earn at least a master's degree. She also says, “Farming will always be a part of my life, though. I hope to increase my herd and manage my own farm in addition to my career.”

Region 2:
Julie Thelen
Saline

Time is of the essence for Julie Thelen of the Saline FFA Chapter. She is co-secretary of her school’s National Honor Society, a member of the Students Against Destructive Decision Making organization, a Saline Family Career and Community Leaders of America member and past officer, a member of the varsity Track and Field team and a 4-H member.

Julie said, “I joined FFA because of my friends in 4-H and older FFA members who served as state officers and encouraged me to be active. I joined not really knowing anything but learned so much after competing in a Greenhand leadership contest.”

Julie currently serves as her chapter president and was vice president of both her chapter and Region II last year. Her SAE encompasses diversified livestock production, ag services and home and community development.

Julie plans to attend Michigan State University next fall to major in agriscience education.

Region 3:
Kayla Stomack
Ubly

Kayla Stomack is a highly motivated teenager. As a senior in high school and president of her FFA chapter, she balances high school activities and spends many hours laboring on her SAE of forage production placement with alfalfa hay.

Kayla began working on a farm alongside her brother when she was twelve years old. “When I first started,” she remembered, “I had people doubting me about whether I could handle the hard work.” Typically, she starts the day by opening up the barn, cleaning the area and also fixing and setting up equipment on the field. Following this, Kayla routinely unloads hay from the wagons and moves the equipment for seven to eight hours. She then finishes the day by closing the barn.

Kayla has learned the importance of working together and relying on others. She said her SAE has “taught me to believe in myself.” After receiving her diploma, she plans on attending Michigan State University and majoring in veterinary medicine.
Region 4: Stephanie Gewirtz
Perry-Morrice

Stephanie Gewirtz is a senior and president of the Perry-Morris FFA Chapter. At a young age, she followed in her father’s footsteps and began her involvement with the FFA, starting her SAE of cattle production.

As the fourth generation living on her family farm, Stephanie said, “I first got involved with cattle when my aunt gave me one heifer and I began breeding her.”

She feeds and waters her pasture cows and calves along with her steer in the barn everyday. Stephanie also breeds heifers and vaccinates cattle.

This hard work has taught Stephanie an important lesson. “What you put into something is what you get out of it,” she advised. “If you work hard it will pay off.”

Her careful record keeping and management of her cattle herd has led her to receive several awards from her chapter.

Next fall, Stephanie plans on attending Lansing Community College and concurrently take animal science courses at Michigan State University.

Region 5: Michelle Andrus
Grant

Currently a junior and vice president of the Grant FFA Chapter, Michelle Andrus is very involved with her SAE of sheep production.

Besides the daily chores of feeding and watering the animals and inspecting their bedding, Michelle is also responsible for the seasonal tasks of worming, weighing and tagging the sheep. She also inspects their fences for damage.

Four years ago when Michelle began her SAE, she was not nearly as educated about sheep as she is now. Today, she knows how to give sheep shots, identify cysts and also has just expanded her SAE to include breeding ewes.

She gives credit to the FFA for developing her assertive personality. “The FFA has taught me to be more outgoing,” she commented. “I have made a lot of friends through the FFA.”

For her future, Michelle aspires to attend Michigan State University and major in elementary education.

Region 6: Caitlin Lorenc
Benzie Central

Caitlin Lorenc has had a unique SAE since she was a junior at Benzie Central. Now a senior, FFA Chapter Reporter and Region VI Secretary, she is still participating in her SAE of raising bees and harvesting honey.

Caitlin has considered her SAE an awesome experience since she first started her apiary, the place her bees are kept. She was first encouraged to raise bees by her advisor, who along with her parents helped her to get involved.

Her bees generally care for themselves; however, feeding them a mixture of sugar and water is important during the fall and winter. To go inside the hive, she must first smoke the bees, but be careful because “No one likes an angry bee,” she said.

Caitlin has learned a lot from observing her bees. “Hives work together as a team and build a strong colony,” stated Caitlin.

Caitlin plans on attending Michigan State University and majoring in landscape design and also studying journalism and performing arts.

Submit your SAE or one of your student’s SAEs!

Email Dustin Petty at pettyd@carrs.msu.edu
Say what?

Regional Responses to Current Issues

The question: What position of leadership would you like to try?

**Corey Austin**
Mason

I would want to be a business owner. All the big positions such as the president and legislator are too big. This way I would still be responsible for my actions.

**Marie Hruby**
Fremont

I would like to own my own business because it would be fun to have the responsibility. Also, I think it would be cool to have customers and make them happy.

**Anne Nuttall**
Stephenson

I think that I’d like to be a senator. Not too many women achieve a position that high in government, and to be able to make such a large influence on people would be amazing.

**Anthony Klingler**
Bronson

I would want to be a teacher. I have always enjoyed helping others, and I would love to help students learn and become the leaders of tomorrow.

**Jordan Riske**
Springport

I would be a business owner. For as long as I can remember, my dad has owned his own business and that’s what I would want to do. It is a leadership role and you are still well connected to the community.

**Alisha Kirsch**
Harbor Beach

I would like to be a teacher because I love children, and we as adults can actually learn life lessons from their innocence and outlook on life.

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Share & Win!

We appreciate the input students provide for this page. If you would like to submit your thoughts on agriculture, please contact Michigan’s FFA Region II State Vice President, Jake Riske at riskej@carrs.msu.edu. So come on and speak your mind, so you can strut your stuff in this stylish FFA t-shirt.
Jeff FFA has to offer. explore everything the opportunities and further investigate these within your grasp. We everything that lies opportunities pass you Michigan FFA, to not let. We challenge you, others, require some experience that is the just come with the members. Some of them offers each of its opportunities that the FFA Here are six incredible to us. opportunities provided advantage of same chance to take members that have the widespread mosaic of Congress, we are a organization member are incredibly available to you. Use the opportunities made to take advantage of the members, I challenge you field. Michigan FFA successful in any career opportunity to be give members the interpersonal skills that teamwork and become elite. some type of further members continue on to school, 86% of FFA knowledge. They are why ways to expand experiments and jobs after school are great academies. FFA is a perfect model of academic excellence. Classes, hands-on experiments and jobs after school are great ways to expand knowledge. They are why you as FFA members have a leg up on the competition. After high school, 86% of FFA members continue on to some type of further education, helping FFA members become elite. Leadership is an Opportunity... Take It

With people asking more and more often, “What’s in the FFA for me?” the resounding answer are so powerful, they could potentially overlap each other. The truth is that the opportunities that are available to an FFA member are incredibly vast. As an organization that was chartered by Congress, we are a leadership organization that stresses premier leadership, the heart of our organization will always lie within the agricultural community. This is where we draw out our hard work ethic and the values we hold true. When one attends an agriculture program, he or she can expect to learn in a new and exciting way — with hands-on activities and experiments that one wouldn’t normally get in a physics, algebra or history classes.

Career Opportunities

An opportunity made available to us as FFA members is the chance to explore. It’s through career exploration that we are able to discover our dream job, the one career that is truly right for each of us.

Through programs like our Supervised Agricultural Experience project, we are provided with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience, preparing us for our future. The FFA also provides leadership, teamwork and interpersonal skills that give members the opportunity to be successful in any career field. Michigan FFA members, I challenge you to take advantage of the opportunities made available to you. Use the FFA to help open the door to a brighter future.

Academies

FFA is a perfect model of academic excellence. Classes, hands-on experiments and jobs after school are great ways to expand knowledge. They are why you as FFA members have a leg up on the competition. After high school, 86% of FFA members continue on to some type of further education, helping FFA members become elite.

Travel

With Michigan being such a large landmass and chapters near the borders of four other states, trips are as common to FFA as is the blue jacket. Whether it is to leadership contacts within your own region or to a conference in East Lansing, the time spent in a bus or van gives you the perfect time to see our beautiful state and bond with your fellow members. However, travel isn’t restricted to within Michigan. With opportunities like National Convention and the Washington Leadership Conference, you can admire the quiet beauty of the Lincoln Memorial or the awesome Indy 500 Race Track. Take advantage of the opportunity to travel and become a richer person because of it.

Agriscience

FFA is not just for farmers. We’ve heard the reassurances time and time again when trying to recruit non-traditional members. While this is true and we are a leadership organization that stresses premier leadership, the heart of our organization will always lie within the agricultural community. This is where we draw out our hard work ethic and the values we hold true. When one attends an agriculture program, he or she can expect to learn in a new and exciting way — with hands-on activities and experiments that one wouldn’t normally get in a physics, algebra or history classes.

Scholarship

Across the country, individuals and businesses of all sizes and types understand the value of the FFA. Because of this, there are hundreds of opportunities open to members of the FFA to win scholarships. More than two million dollars is awarded each year by the National FFA Organization to graduating FFA members. More money is available in local scholarships, given by chapters, alumni and businesses. I encourage you, Michigan FFA, to look for these scholarships that will assist you in taking full advantage of your experiences in our organization.

Kick It Up a Notch

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With people asking more and more often, “What’s in the FFA for me?” the resounding answer are so powerful, they could potentially overlap each other. The truth is that the opportunities that are available to an FFA member are incredibly vast. As an organization that was chartered by Congress, we are a leadership organization that stresses premier leadership, the heart of our organization will always lie within the agricultural community. This is where we draw out our hard work ethic and the values we hold true. When one attends an agriculture program, he or she can expect to learn in a new and exciting way — with hands-on activities and experiments that one wouldn’t normally get in a physics, algebra or history classes.

Career Opportunities

An opportunity made available to us as FFA members is the chance to explore. It’s through career exploration that we are able to discover our dream job, the one career that is truly right for each of us.

Through programs like our Supervised Agricultural Experience project, we are provided with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience, preparing us for our future. The FFA also provides leadership, teamwork and interpersonal skills that give members the opportunity to be successful in any career field. Michigan FFA members, I challenge you to take advantage of the opportunities made available to you. Use the FFA to help open the door to a brighter future.

Academies

FFA is a perfect model of academic excellence. Classes, hands-on experiments and jobs after school are great ways to expand knowledge. They are why you as FFA members have a leg up on the competition. After high school, 86% of FFA members continue on to some type of further education, helping FFA members become elite.

Travel

With Michigan being such a large landmass and chapters near the borders of four other states, trips are as common to FFA as is the blue jacket. Whether it is to leadership contacts within your own region or to a conference in East Lansing, the time spent in a bus or van gives you the perfect time to see our beautiful state and bond with your fellow members. However, travel isn’t restricted to within Michigan. With opportunities like National Convention and the Washington Leadership Conference, you can admire the quiet beauty of the Lincoln Memorial or the awesome Indy 500 Race Track. Take advantage of the opportunity to travel and become a richer person because of it.

Agriscience

FFA is not just for farmers. We’ve heard the reassurances time and time again when trying to recruit non-traditional members. While this is true and we are a leadership organization that stresses premier leadership, the heart of our organization will always lie within the agricultural community. This is where we draw out our hard work ethic and the values we hold true. When one attends an agriculture program, he or she can expect to learn in a new and exciting way — with hands-on activities and experiments that one wouldn’t normally get in a physics, algebra or history classes.

Scholarship

Across the country, individuals and businesses of all sizes and types understand the value of the FFA. Because of this, there are hundreds of opportunities open to members of the FFA to win scholarships. More than two million dollars is awarded each year by the National FFA Organization to graduating FFA members. More money is available in local scholarships, given by chapters, alumni and businesses. I encourage you, Michigan FFA, to look for these scholarships that will assist you in taking full advantage of your experiences in our organization.
The Michigan FFA Alumni is located in Marshall, with the Marshall FFA Alumni receiving silver awards for being "Outstanding Affiliates" at the National FFA Convention in Louisville, Kentucky this past October.

Previously, Marshall received first place at the 2004 Michigan FFA Alumni Annual State Meeting in February as an affiliate having more than 50 members. The Marshall FFA Alumni assists in many community activities and provides outstanding support of the Marshall FFA Chapter with projects, such as academic scholarship awards, leadership contests, and the annual citrus sale.

Lowell was also recognized at the annual state meeting as being a top affiliate in the category of less than 50 members.

On October 28-30, a group of seven high school administrators and two Michigan State University (MSU) professors traveled by charter bus to Louisville, Kentucky for the 77th National FFA Convention. Kim Kramer, Superintendent of the Maple Valley School District stated, "The entire three days were very enlightening and enjoyable. I truly believe that every superintendent should attend."

The purpose of the trip is to expose school administrators to FFA and its programs while watching students be recognized for their outstanding achievements. Each year, administrators personally view the opportunities that await students within their own school districts. If they become actively involved within FFA, the Michigan FFA Alumni recognizes the importance of this trip, which is the basis for providing planning and financial support.

College Scholarships
The FFA Alumni and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) at MSU are completing agreements for a scholarship program. FFA members who will be attending the CANR as freshmen will have the opportunity to apply for scholarship awards that will be matched by CANR. Plans are being made to initiate this program for the 2005-2006 school year.

The amount and number of awards will be based upon the availability of funds. All parties involved are looking forward to beginning and continuing a program that will benefit FFA members attending MSU as freshmen.

Homer FFA Alumni has become the first donor with a pledge of $500. Homer has an existing scholarship program that supports graduating seniors and students in undergraduate and graduate programs. In 2004, the Homer FFA Alumni awarded $3,200 to Homer FFA members attending college.

WLC Scholarships
The Washington Leadership Conference (WLC) scholarship applications are due on January 15, 2005. One full scholarship will be awarded along with additional partial scholarships, as funding will allow. Students that attend WLC often say that the conference was the favorite event during their FFA involvement.

Annual State Meeting
The 2005 Annual FFA Alumni State meeting will be held at Convis Township Hall, near Marshall, on February 2, 2005. Region I will host the annual meeting this year. Each year thereafter, the annual meeting will be hosted by another region.

Funds for WLC scholarships are generated each year from the silent and live auctions held at the annual meeting. Donations of auction items are needed for both the Silent and Live Auctions. Former FFA member and FFA Advisor Rodney Ervans, of Homer, will serve as the auctioneer. At the meeting, annual reports are presented as well as an election of officers.

Please mark the meeting date of February 2, 2005 on your calendar. Tickets may be purchased for $20.00 each. To make reservations, call Matt Smego, the Alumni Executive Director, at 517-323-7000 ext. 3234.
The Michigan FFA Foundation was proud to partner with Chevrolet and Erickson USA in the Chevrolet FFA Scholarship Program, which provided a fundraising opportunity for the 105 Michigan FFA Chapters across the state. Nearly one-third of the chapters participated.

The Chevrolet FFA Scholarship program allowed chapter members, at a community event, to request a suggested five-dollar donation for a ticket which allowed the donor to enter to win a 2004 Chevrolet Silverado. In addition to a chance to win, the donation allowed the individual to visit their local Chevy dealer and get a free Chevrolet FFA Scholarship program T-shirt. The program was successful in many districts with chapters collecting $5.00 donations for more than 500 tickets in some cases.

Michigan FFA Foundation Executive Director Kate Powers stated, “The Chevrolet FFA Scholarship program was a great activity for the chapters this fall. Many teachers have provided positive feedback, and were able to form relationships within their communities with the Chevy Dealerships.”

All proceeds from the program stay within the FFA with $4.00 out of every $5.00 donation staying at the chapter level, and the other funds being used at the state and national levels.

**Honorary American Degree Recipients**

- The Honorary American FFA Degree is the highest honor bestowed upon an individual who has demonstrated a long-term and outstanding commitment to the FFA. Michigan was proud to have seven distinguished individuals recognized at the 77th National FFA Convention with the Honorary American FFA Degree in Louisville, Kentucky.

- Comer Skinner, from the Hopkins Alumni is among the recipients. Comer served as president of the Michigan FFA Alumni in 1990-91 and 2000-01.

- Tammy Belavek, the Agiscience teacher and FFA advisor at Lapeer County Vo-Tech, received a special Honorary American Degree for Agriscience Teachers. Recipients are required to have taught for at least ten years and a high percentage of their enrolled students must be dues paying members of the FFA.

- Current Michigan State Senator, Ron Jelinek also received the award. Jelinek was an FFA member from the Three Oaks High School chapter and later went on to become a FFA advisor and Agriscience teacher at River Valley. He also received his Honorary State FFA Degree in 1996.

- Dr. David Krueger was a member of the FFA in Kimberly, Idaho. In the early 1990’s, Krueger became a professor at Michigan State University and also served as the first Executive Director of the Michigan FFA Foundation.

- Dr. Delbert Mokma was originally a member of the Hollings FFA Chapter in Hollings, Michigan. He has continued his work with the FFA, serving as chairman of the Land Conservation contest since the late 1970’s. He has been a professor at Michigan State University since 1971.

- Mr. Larry Meyer is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Michigan Retailers Services, Inc. He is a man of service, having seats on the Lansing City Council and the boards of Citizens Bank and Cadillac Shoe Products and receiving three appointments to the Michigan Department of Commerce.
Whole new fields of expertise in agriculture and natural resources are emerging. Today, new career opportunities are available in areas as diverse as animal genetics, food packaging and marketing.

The MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

A recent study forecasts that the number of job openings in the agriculture and natural resource industry will exceed the number of qualified graduates every year through 2005.

Thus, the ANR industry is looking for skilled graduates to generate the value-added products that contribute to our country’s growth. It needs trained professionals to take on the challenges of tomorrow.

In return, the ANR industry offers an exceptional lineup of rewarding and challenging careers. In fact, dynamic new opportunities are emerging in all sectors of the industry.

Your future.

Discover the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University, and acquire the tools you need to help make the best decisions for your future.

Interested in expanding your horizons, check out: http://www.canr.msu.edu/dept.htm