

# The Michigan FFA Creed



Spring 2013

Agricultural  
Education  
Edition



## D Motto In Motion

Check out one agriscience teacher and how he makes a positive difference in student's lives

## F Career Quest

See what it takes to become and agricultural educator

## H Editor's Choice

Read one agricultural education student's testimony

## I State Officer Stats

Learn more about three of the 2012-2013 State Officers

## J A Legacy In Ag

Discover the legacy Dr. O. Donald Meaders left on agricultural education

## N Fun Page

Get crafty with crayon art

## 2012-2013 State Officers



L to R: Jaime Curth, Region I State Vice President; Samantha Engelhardt, State Reporter; Darcy Lipskey, Region III State Vice President; Morgan Stuart, State Secretary; Nathan Krohn, State Treasurer; Abby Spickerman, State President; Max Kempf, Region V State Vice President; Juliana Forbush, State Vice President; Emily Calderone, Region IV State Vice President; Hannah Fallowfield, Region VI State Vice President; Levi Voorhies, State Sentinel

# State Officer Excursions

By:  
Morgan Stuart

As a state officer, I am blessed being able to travel to many different places around the state and country. It has been wonderful traveling around the mitten and learning so many new things from each visit. One visit I will never forget was the Golightly FFA chapter.

The Golightly FFA chapter is located on Belle Isle, which I had never heard of before. I quickly learned that Belle Isle is an island off of Detroit that is absolutely gorgeous. It was so serene that you almost forget it is close to a huge city. The tech center is near the middle of the island and is impossible to miss for one reason: the greenhouses. On Belle Isle there are a total of twenty greenhouses, that's right I said twenty. Five of those 20 are used by the Golightly Tech Center.

These greenhouses are a vital component of the Golightly FFA chapter. Since they are located in an urban area, it is difficult to teach traditional production agriculture. That is what made my visit to the Golightly chapter so memorable - their phenomenal way of teaching urban agriculture to students that come to the tech center from schools all over Detroit. The agriculture teacher, Ellen Moro, is very passionate about spreading agriculture through urban areas and it was easy to tell how much she enjoyed her job during my visit.

As mentioned earlier, the Golightly chapter utilizes five greenhouses, and do they ever put those greenhouses to good work. The students

plant flowers and vegetables in the greenhouses and are in charge of taking care of them. Then they sell the flowers and a portion of the vegetables to generate money for their chapter. Another portion of the vegetables are used to teach the students how to prepare healthy meals from scratch. Once a week, a

vegetable is chosen, the students spend the day learning a recipe using it, and actually cook it. The students told me how they loved the salsa they made from tomatoes but didn't like anything made with eggplant. The chapter reserved some of the vegetable plants for a community event they planned. For this event they invited Detroit community members to visit Belle Isle where the students put on workshops about how to plant and care for vegetable plants. After the presentations, vegetable plants were given to the community

members so that they could create their own garden and cook healthy meals. Then about a month after these vegetable plants were given away, the students at Golightly went to go visit the community members that took them to see how their gardens were progressing.

Visiting the Golightly FFA chapter was an amazing experience; the students had so much energy and excitement for agriculture. Their excitement shocked and inspired me. There was so much passion for agriculture from students living in the tenth largest city

in the United States. Urban agriculture is an important and rapidly expanding part of the FFA. The Golightly FFA chapter is an outstanding example of an urban agriculture program and how it can benefit and inspire urban students. Visiting the Golightly FFA chapter opened my eyes

to all of the possibilities that urban agriculture offers and all of the benefits it provides students. I now have a different interpretation of agriculture and am determined to be an advocate for urban agriculture not only during my year as a state officer, but for the rest of my life.



# Living to Serve:

Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve. A motto that we all recite time after time, but have we really taken the time to think about the meaning behind those words. And how we, as committed FFA members, are supposed to be fulfilling that standard? To me, "Living to Serve" can be the trickiest one to get a good understanding on so I have taken a deeper look. According to Webster; 'Serve-to exert one's self continuously or stately for the benefit of'. So... we should be giving ourselves for the benefit of others. Giving up our time to help those in need - using our talents to make a difference.

As FFA members, each and every one of us should be learning how to live to serve

effectively and make a difference in our communities in as many ways as possible. The best way to learn how to accomplish something would be to have a mentor, or role model who does this daily. We as members, have a distinct advantage in learning how to live to serve by looking up to our advisors and taking advice from those who are champions at living to serve.

Growing up as the ag teacher's daughter, it was a little easier for me to see just what our advisors put in day after day for us to make sure we receive the best experience from this organization. My dad was an FFA member in high school and has now been the advisor at Byron High School for 15 years teaching grades 6-12 about agriculture and FFA. He

certainly did not plan on becoming "Mr. Forbush" to hundreds of different high school students when he graduated. When he went off to college and came across kids living down the hall from him who had no clue how to wire a light socket or build a loft for their beds, he decided that more kids needed this education while still in high school and he made the decision to serve as a teacher.

Being the one sitting at the dinner table while he is still at contest practices, or staying at



# Educating the Future

By:  
Juliana Forbush

the school until way past dark waiting for a ride home, it was plain to see that he really cares about the students and their experiences. Coming across teachers like this are few and far between but when our parents meet our ag teachers for the first time, I believe they can really see the effort our advisors put in and how much they care about members. My dad has coached hundreds of leadership and skills teams, taught over ten different agriculture education classes throughout the years, and attended way more conferences than I could ever imagine. He would never hesitate to add more to his plate if it meant providing better experiences for the members of his chapter. You can count the success rate by how many state winning teams a school has had, or how many state officers have come from one chapter, but in the eyes of a true ag teacher the success rate has nothing to do with those numbers. To a true ag teacher, the most important numbers are the lives of those who they have touched by teaching them about the importance of agriculture and the hands on education those members receive from being in a career and technical education class.

Even though basic, required classes in high school provide students with helpful, useful information, being enrolled in an agriculture class and becoming a member of the FFA benefits the students to a much higher



level. Having the opportunity to be a part of a team that runs a chapter or having the skill to recite a speech you wrote in 30 minutes to an audience and judges has a serious impact on each and every member of this organization. Being able to watch hundreds of kids gain those experiences and knowing it is because of what you do for a living is why ag teachers become who they are.

Ag teachers are the ones you can go to for anything. Ag teachers are the ones that let you chill in the shop during lunch or after school. Ag teachers are the ones that you stay in contact with after high school and leave the most important impact. Ag teachers are the ones that live the definition of serving. My dad is one of those teachers and I wouldn't trade it for the world.

You're in high school now, and it's time to start thinking about your future. You've probably heard lots of advice about where to look for ideas on career pathways, from your counselor's office to the local college. How about looking closer to home? Start in your agriscience classroom.

When I was in high school, I had plans to become a florist. My agriculture teacher, Mr. Patrick, supported this idea and helped me find a job at a flower shop. I loved working there, but after a few years, decided that being a florist wasn't for me. I started thinking about agricultural communications, since I loved to write. Again, Mr. Patrick was there with suggestions for how to improve my writing. He even helped me enter and win a state agricultural communications competition. Then, I started to sway from that career idea, and Mr. Patrick finally sat me down and said, "Have you ever thought about being an agricultural teacher?" In a word, no. "Think about it," was all he said.

I left my high school that day and thought about what Mr. Patrick had said. Why hadn't I ever thought about being an ag teacher? I loved my ag classes. I loved the FFA. The more I thought about it, the more the idea appealed to me, and here I am, 13 years into my agriscience teaching career.

Have you ever thought about being an ag teacher? If your answer is no, why not? Is it because no one has asked you? Because here is your invitation to think about it: I'm asking you if you have ever thought about becoming an agriscience teacher. I'll talk to you about the pros and cons of my job and I want you to think about whether it appeals to you.



The #1 best part of my job as an agriscience teacher is working with students. I love that I get to know kids while they are in middle school and then I get to be a part of their life as they grow up. Most teachers have students for a year or maybe two. I have most of my students for five or six. I really get to know them and they become a part of my life.

The second best part of my job is working with the FFA. FFA is truly a life changing organization. I love the equality that the blue jacket brings about. When you are in official dress, no one can tell if you are poor or rich; if you're from the country or the city. The jacket puts everyone on the same level, and gets you working toward a common goal. Seeing kids challenge themselves to overcome their fear, push themselves to compete and grow



# Agriculture's Youth

into confident young adults is very rewarding. The third thing that I really enjoy about my job is being a part of the community. The agriscience program is very reliant on volunteers and parents to keep running smoothly. When I began teaching, I was new to town. Through our agriscience program, I have gotten to know my community and appreciate them in a way that a traditional teacher might not



see. I'm truly amazed at how many people care and invest in agricultural education.

Now, to be honest with you, there are challenges to being an Agriscience teacher. The first thing you will struggle with is time management. It is easy to become consumed with all the things that need to be done and forget that you need a life outside your job. You need to utilize the talents of the people in your community in order to get them to invest in the program and save your sanity.

A second challenge you will face will be fighting the negative image that the public has about teachers. When you become a teacher, you do so because you love your subject and your students, not because you

make a fortune or get summers off. There is a misconception that teachers become teachers because they can't do anything else or are "too lazy" to work all year. You have lots of other options. You choose this career and you will be passionate about your work, and mine, speaks for itself.

The third thing you may struggle with as a teacher might be staying on top of paperwork. I find that the easiest way to deal with this is to do one day at a time. Don't let paperwork pile up for weeks at a time, and then go on a correcting spree. Try to finish correcting each day.

Well, I've asked you. Have you ever thought about being an agriscience teacher? Go home and think about it. When you're ready to talk about it, go to your own ag teacher, email me at [mblock@ravennaschools.org](mailto:mblock@ravennaschools.org), or look up information about MSU Agriscience major at <http://www.carrs.msu.edu/>. Do what you love, and love what you do, by teaching ag!



Melanie Block  
Agriscience Teacher & FFA Advisor  
Ravenna Public Schools

# CTE Testimony

By:  
A region II FFA member

Growing up in a small, rural town of around 1,200 I quickly learned that you must jump on every opportunity that you are offered. Whether it was the fact that FFA was a family tradition, or that one-third of our high school population is an FFA member, I found it natural to join the FFA. Little did I know that 15 dollars for dues would change my life forever.

As high school progressed I found that visual, kinesthetic learning was my style. Combined with the rural agricultural roots of my hometown, the three core model of an agricultural education program was a perfect fit. My first day of class, freshman year, I walked into my botany class and



knew that I found my place. The smile on my Ag teacher's face and that blue corduroy jacket hanging up reaffirmed that this was right for me.

As the first week of school passed we dove deeper into our agricultural education curriculum. The technical and hands-on element my classes offered had perfected the learning process. From that day on I took an ag class every year – botany, zoology, agricultural finance and natural resources. These classes took the hardest concepts of commodities and futures, ecology, mathematics, biology and business management and applied them to practical, everyday situations. No other course that I have been in has taken institutional information and transformed it into a constructive, tactile curriculum.

Another great opportunity I was offered was the development of my supervised agricultural experience. My main motivation was to develop my business skills in the production agriculture setting. I continually applied the information that I learned in the classroom to my farming enterprise. This took experiential learning to the next level. Developing crop rotation strategies, using integrated pest management programs along with planting high yielding seeds is irreplaceable information that I would have never learned as a high school student if it wasn't for my SAE. Now, I could take my classroom experience and my SAE and apply it to the FFA component. When I joined the FFA I became part of something larger. I joined a community of over 557,318 members working to better themselves and the world. While participating in skill and leadership career development events I found my true passion – agriculture, education and a strong work ethic. The National FFA Organization truly developed my ability to achieve "premier leadership, personal growth, and career success." Public speaking, interviewing and hands-on skills are just a few traits that the FFA instilled in me.

My involvement in an agricultural education program and FFA chapter has been the most instrumental piece in my growth and development as a student, leader and community member. I have learned the importance of youth advocacy, higher education and continual growth. I wholeheartedly believe in FFA, agricultural education and career and technical education.





# State Officer Stats



## Hannah Fallowfield Region VI State VP

Chapter: Benzie Central  
College: Michigan State  
SAE: Diversified Livestock  
Theme song: "Don't Stop Believin'"

### Favorites:

Sport: Soccer  
FFA event: Leadership Contests  
T.V. show: Say Yes To The Dress  
Book: *Harry Potter Series*  
Candy: Twix



## Morgan Stuart State Secretary

Chapter: Dundee  
College: Michigan State  
SAE: Equine Production  
Theme song: "Pumped Up Kicks"

### Favorites:

T.V. show: Glee  
Hobby: Horseback Riding  
Sports team: Red Wings  
Movie: Remember the Titans  
Food: Spaghetti



## Nathan Krohn State Treasurer

Chapter: Laker  
College: Michigan State  
SAE: Diversified Crop Production  
Theme song: "When The Sand Runs Out"

### Favorites:

Candy: Peach Rings  
Musician: Jake Owen  
Hobby: Snowmobiling  
Sport: Football  
Book: *The Hunger Games*

# Thank you, Dr. Meaders

By:  
Dustin  
Petty

Michigan and the world lost an advocate for agricultural education in December.

Dr. O. Donald Meaders, 89, passed away peacefully in Lansing, leaving behind a wife of 60 years, two children, two grandchildren and a legacy that transcends generations and continents.

A son of Nebraska and a veteran of the Second World War, Meaders was educated on the G.I. Bill. He earned bachelors and master's degrees in his home state before making his way to Michigan State University where he received his doctorate in agricultural education.

It was here, from 1958 to 1990, that he made an indelible impact. As a professor, advisor and researcher, he earned respect from his colleagues and the ability to educate several generations of Michigan's agriculture teachers.

The list of Meaders' awards, accomplishments and memberships is awesome yet not surprising. He was presented with several Outstanding International Agricultural awards, service awards and numerous invitations to serve on committees and boards driving agricultural development throughout the world.

But having your name on a plaque or roster isn't a true measure of one's merits.

Dave Wyrick, Executive Secretary of the Michigan FFA Association and former agriscience teacher in Byron, was a graduate student pursuing his master's degree when he encountered Meaders as a professor.

"He was a polished, kind teacher that responded to the needs of his students. I'll give you an example. In one class, he was teaching us things they would have taught the boys coming home from war in 1947. So we said, 'Dr. Meaders, this isn't how it's necessarily done



anymore.' He listened to us and researched the issue and came back with new lessons.

"He wasn't a temple of knowledge and he didn't pretend to be. But he cared about his students and wanted us to have the best tools available when we entered our own classrooms."

In addition to his work at MSU, Meaders worked to ensure that agriculture was a component of educational policy around the globe. It was not uncommon for him to travel to Taiwan, Latvia, Nepal, Cameroon or anyplace in between to spread the gospel of agriculture education and how it can benefit a society.

Even in retirement, Meaders continued volunteering internationally, hosting seminars and building relationships and mentorships with younger educators.

The man could not slow down.

And now, facing a future of Michigan agriculture education without him, we must trust that the lessons he taught us and the passion he passed down will find their ways into tomorrow's generation of educators.

We can believe that Dr. Meaders has heard the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

# National Convention Results

## Proficiency Awards

Evan Medvec - Saline FFA - Bronze  
Bethany Meyers - Branch Area Career Center FFA - National Finalist  
Nicholas Verbanic - Montague FFA - Participant  
Alexia Birdsell - Waldron FFA - Bronze  
Darcy Lipskey - Ubly FFA - Gold  
Carmen Zwemmer - Laker FFA - Silver  
Nick Hagen - Ubly FFA - Silver  
Nathan Krohn - Laker FFA - Bronze  
Samantha Sikkenga - Montague FFA - Bronze  
William Zonker - Jackson Area Career Center FFA - Bronze  
Matthew Fisher - Lapeer County FFA - Gold  
Nick Wellman - Hopkins FFA - Silver



## Agriscience Fair

Renee Souva - Branch Area Career Center  
Courtney Souva - Branch Area Career Center  
Cailyn Hines - Branch Area Career Center  
Bethany Meyers - Branch Area Career Center  
Lucas Wielfaert - Lenawee Vo Tech Center PM

## Career Development Events

Agricultural Communications - Laker FFA - Bronze  
Agronomy - Laker FFA - Silver  
Agricultural Issues - Cassopolis/Ross Beatty FFA - Silver  
Agricultural Sales - Branch Area Career Center FFA - Gold  
Agricultural Mechanics - Durand FFA - Silver  
Creed Speaking - Rebecca Maurer - Hastings FFA - Bronze  
Dairy Cattle Evaluation - Olivet FFA - Bronze  
Dairy Cattle Handlers- Shelby Berens - Hopkins FFA - Gold  
Environmental - Branch Area Career Center - Bronze  
Extemporaneous Public Speaking - Jaime Curth - Maple Valley FFA - Bronze  
Farm Business Management - Corunna FFA - Bronze  
Floriculture - Lapeer County FFA - Silver  
Food Science - Durand FFA - Bronze  
Forestry - Lenawee FFA - Silver  
Horse Evaluation - Ovid-Elsie FFA - Silver  
Job Interview - Ryan Hall - Olivet FFA - Silver  
Livestock Evaluation - Branch Area Career Center FFA - Silver  
Marketing Plan - Springport FFA - Bronze  
Meats Evaluation - Sanilac FFA - Silver  
Milk Quality - Charlotte FFA - Silver  
Nursery/Landscape - Kent Career Center FFA - Silver  
Poultry - Laker FFA - Gold  
Prepared Public Speaking - Rebecca Whalen - Corunna FFA - Bronze





# Michigan FFA Alumni



## Ag Career Network

Ag Career Network is up and running! This is not only the new method for your affiliates to manage membership, but it is also an excellent communication tool. Affiliates can communicate to alumni members and alumni members can indicate to teachers ways that they can contribute to the chapter.

For information on how to utilize this new system please view this document [www.ffa.org/documents/alum\\_agcn\\_member.pdf](http://www.ffa.org/documents/alum_agcn_member.pdf).

If any alumni membership coordinators have not yet had a chance to get in the system, or if anybody has any questions please contact Henry Reinart at [reinarth@anr.msu.edu](mailto:reinarth@anr.msu.edu).

**AgCN Allows FFA Alumni to:**

- Manage your personal information.
- Track your FFA Alumni and other activities and events.
- Indicate how you'd like to interact with FFA Alumni affiliates and FFA chapters.
- Share areas of expertise with agricultural educators.
- Access affiliate calendar and news.
- Take advantage of career planning tools.

**DON'T DELAY, ASK FOR YOUR INVITE TODAY.**

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. Copyright 2012

## New Administrative Director

We are pleased to welcome Jason Jaekel as the new Administrative Director of the Michigan FFA Alumni.

Jaekel has worked for Michigan Farm Bureau since 2008 as a regional representative in the Northeast Region and West Region before taking the position in November as the manager of the Young Farmer Department and with it, his position with the Michigan FFA Alumni.

Jason is a graduate from Michigan State University with a dual Bachelor of Science degree in Science and Technology Studies from Lyman Briggs and an Agricultural and Natural Resources Communication degree from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

While at MSU, Jason was active in numerous activities including Farm House Fraternity, National Agricultural Marketing Association and was the Michigan Association of FFA State secretary in 2003 – 2004.

Jason and his wife Misty reside in northern Kent County with their two dogs.

**Save the Date! The 2013 Michigan FFA Alumni Annual will be on Saturday, March 23rd at Laker High School in Pigeon.**

**Want to show your alumni pride? Order a Michigan FFA Alumni t-shirt at [www.michiganffa.org/alumni/shirts.htm](http://www.michiganffa.org/alumni/shirts.htm).**



# Leave Your Legacy

For many individuals, the Michigan FFA has served as the key ingredient to career success. Several of Michigan agriculture's leaders still have a blue and gold jacket hanging in their closet.

**DIAMOND DONOR: \$1,000 OR MORE**

**GOLD DONOR: \$500-\$999**

**SILVER DONOR: \$250-\$499**

**BRONZE DONOR: \$100-\$99**

Are you one of those individuals? Did the FFA help point you in a direction that lead to a successful career? Did the leadership training you received clear a path to where you are now? If so, would you be willing to Leave a Legacy with the Michigan FFA.

Each year the Michigan FFA Foundation recognizes different donor levels at the FFA State Convention and throughout the year. Our generous supporters help provide thousands of dollars that support the different opportunities FFA offers to the students in Michigan. If you are interested in contributing to the Michigan FFA please contact us, or log onto [www.michiganffa.org](http://www.michiganffa.org) to learn more about how you can Leave a Legacy with the Michigan FFA.

The Foundation is the fundraising arm of the Michigan FFA Association. Our mission is to impact youth leadership development in Michigan as it relates to FFA and Agriscience Education initiatives. We strive to develop Premier Leadership, Career Success and Self-Esteem in our members that will provide them a lifetime of personal success.



446 West Circle Drive  
Agriculture Hall RM 319  
East Lansing, MI 48824  
517-432-2482  
[foundation@michiganffa.org](mailto:foundation@michiganffa.org)

# Melted Crayon Art

By:  
Samantha Engelhardt

## Supplies:

Canvas (any size)  
Crayons (depends on size of canvas)  
Hot Glue Gun  
Hair Dryer  
Old Sheet or Plastic bags  
Black Paper (optional)  
Photo (optional)  
Paint & Paint Brush (optional)

## Instructions:

1. Get a canvas of desired size.
2. Paint background if desired.
3. If you want find a picture of a good silhouette. Tape the picture onto a piece of black paper and cut around the edges.
4. Glue the silhouette onto the canvas.
5. Glue the crayons along the top of the canvas with a hot glue gun. Its easier if the paper is still on the crayons, but if it isn't it just takes more patience to glue them on without them falling off.
6. Once all the crayons are glued on and the glue is dry, lay down an old sheet or plastic bags and also tape some against the wall.
7. Prop the canvas against the wall with about a 45 degree angle with the crayons at the top.
8. Use the hair dryer to melt the crayons. Keep it about an inch or two away from the crayons. Be careful because sometimes it likes to splatter all over. It takes about 20 seconds to melt the darker colored crayons and about a minute to melt the lighter colored crayons.
9. Keep melting the crayons until the desired drip length.
10. Let dry and then you have a lovely piece of art!





She wants to be a seed salesperson or crop scout.

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

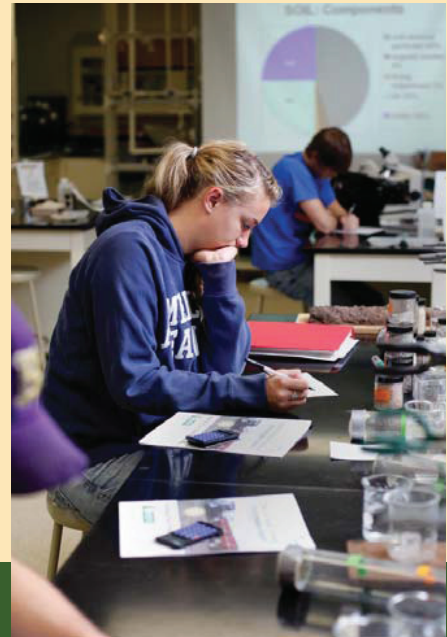
Institute of  
Agricultural Technology

He wants to be an electrical technician.

They'll both do it at Michigan State University through the Institute of Agricultural Technology.

Find out how at  
[www.iat.msu.edu](http://www.iat.msu.edu)





**In the classroom**

**and on the field**



The MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) offers academic options that range from four-year bachelor degrees to two-year certificate programs.

Students apply their interests in the classroom and in the field to gain experience and education for rewarding careers.

Contact the CANR Office of Academic and Student Affairs at 517-355-0234 to schedule your visit to campus to learn what MSU has to offer.

Learn more by visiting [www.canr.msu.edu](http://www.canr.msu.edu).

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