The Michigan FFA will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, weight, sexual orientation or disability. Any student requiring an accommodation as a result of a disability should contact the chapter advisor to arrange such accommodation.
I BELIEVE IN...not taking things for granted. I believe in appreciating what you have and not being afraid to show it. Far too often people overlook the small details of everyday life. Think back to the last time someone held a door open for you or the last time someone paid you a compliment. Did you thank them? Did you show them that they matter to you? Many people do not realize the influence that others have on them. You would not be the person that you are today without the influence of others. Be bold, go outside of the expected and do the unexpected. Say thank you to those who matter or have made a difference in your life.

I BELIEVE IN...seizing the moment and living life to the fullest. I believe in never giving up and always trying your best. When presented with a challenge, face it head on. Do not show signs of doubt or uncertainty. Fear is something that can be overcome. Never let it keep you from pressing forward or trying new things. Live without fear, live without regrets!

I BELIEVE IN...success, as well as failure. There will be times in life when you will try your hardest to achieve a goal and you will fail. In their lyrics for “Mountains,” Lonestar has shown the importance of facing challenges. “There are times in life when you gotta crawl, lose your grip, trip and fall. When you can’t lean on no one else, that’s when you find yourself...” Through trial and hardship, good will shine through. The good Lord will not give you anything you cannot handle.

I BELIEVE IN...helping others. Pay it forward. When someone does something nice for you, do not be afraid to pass it on to others. The world would be a much better place if everyone in it strived to help at least one other person every day. Helping others not only benefits those around you, but also yourself. The next time you see someone in need, do not be afraid to lend a helping hand!

I BELIEVE IN...YOU! FFA members CAN and WILL change the world. It is through the actions of dedicated members and true, authentic leaders that the world will be impacted. Always remember to appreciate what you have, seize the moment, try your best, and most importantly...help those around you!
MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Region 1
Rebekah Flynn-Marshall FFA
A senior at Marshall High School, Rebekah Flynn, is actively involved in FFA. She has been her chapter secretary and is currently serving as the chapter president. She has attended the Fall Leadership Conference multiple times and has competed in both leadership and skills contests. Rebekah’s supervised agricultural experience (SAE) is beef cattle production where she raises steers to show and sell at the Calhoun County Fair. She also shows at other various shows including the Michigan Beef Expo and Winter Classic.

Region 2
Josh Sanders-Jonesville FFA
Josh Sanders is a member of the Jonesville FFA chapter. He started a tilapia fish farm in his own barn. It consists of four 250 gallon tanks for the fish to grow to full size in, a breeding tank as well as the nursery tank. He has all the smaller components that can make a small aquarium operate smoothly! Josh plans to breed his fish, grow them to full size, and finally market them. He also plans on selling the baby fish. Josh’s Favorite FFA activity is competing in the various FFA competitions throughout the year.

Region 3
Nathan Krohn-Laker FFA
Nathan Krohn is the Laker FFA Chapter’s 2011-2012 vice president and is currently serving as the 2011-2012 Region III treasurer. His FFA career started in 8th grade competing in the Junior High Conducts of Meetings team and from there he has grown tremendously as a person and a leader. This past March, Nathan’s demonstration team was named the state winner at the Michigan FFA State Convention. His future plans are to attend Michigan State University and study Agribusiness Management.
Region 4
Emily Calderone-Dansville FFA
Emily Calderone is a hard working junior at Dansville High School. She is a dedicated member who participates in many FFA activities including extemporaneous public speaking, demonstration, floriculture and crops. Also, she has taken part in the state-wide broiler contest through her zoology class and received the Star Agribusiness award at the chapter level. Emily's supervised agricultural experience (SAE) includes planting and maintaining pumpkins on her family’s farm.

Region 5
Emma Roderick-Lowell FFA
Emma Roderick is a senior at Lowell High School and is a six year member of the Lowell FFA Chapter. Emma is a very active member and is the current chapter president and Region V District III Vice President. Throughout her years in FFA, Emma has participated in many activities ranging from Jr. High Conduct of Meetings, Greenhand Public Speaking and Job Interview. Emma has participated in the Fallsburg Fall festival parking, Adopt-a-Road clean up days and spring skills contests.

Region 6
Jill Castle-Standish Sterling FFA
A senior at Standish-Sterling High School, Jill Castle, is an active member participating in leadership contests, coaching middle school teams, being active in her school’s perennial sale, and many other events. She is also currently serving as chapter president and is serving her second term as a regional officer. Some of her favorite FFA activities are state convention and donkey basketball where her community gets involved in the fun!
Learning to Do

At a time when Michigan has a poor economy and morale is low in the community, it is important to remember that the younger generation is today's future. The Ravenna FFA Chapter has seized the opportunity to reach out and build that younger generation in their program. Though they have had middle school agriscience classes since 2003, this is the first time in four years that they have held an 8th grade class.

When the idea of an 8th grade program was brought to the attention of advisor Melanie Block, like any great advisor, she jumped at the chance and asked if they could work an exploratory class back into the schedule. Mrs. Block knew that if she can make their twelve week exposure to agriscience fun and exciting, they are more likely to enroll as a freshman. During their twelve weeks in class, the 8th graders were introduced to a broad range of topics in agriculture, including plant science in which they performed an eight week experiment. Then the focus turned to animal science, wildlife and natural resource management, presentation and leadership skills.

For the Ravenna FFA chapter, this class has been the greatest recruitment tool, by allowing them to seek out students that were excited about agriculture, allowing their chapter to be strengthened.

Instead of typical classroom methods of “let’s talk about it” Mrs. Block brings in live animals to inspect, plants to propagate, eggs to examine, a class pet, or food to make and eat. This created student interest in learning more about agriculture or natural resources. With the 8th grade program, nearly fifty of eighty-five students were recruited into this year’s freshman class. Plans for a Jr. High Chapter are still underway but it is hoped to be achieved with the continued success of the new addition in agriculture education in the school.

By reaching out and teaching every single 8th grader in the Ravenna Public Schools, the impact on the community could be astronomical. Students can be exposed to what Ravenna FFA is all about and hopefully increase their desire to carry on all the traditions of FFA while building memories of their own. Yet, being that younger generation, they can bring energy and new ideas to the forefront of agriculture and natural resources and strengthen their community emotionally and financially.

The Ravenna FFA chapter has already seen many successes. In the 2008-2009 school year, they were the National Association of Agriculture Educators (NAAE) Outstanding Secondary Program. They have had four state officers, three state champions, one national champion, and they have the current national officer candidate. Their advisor Melanie Block has been the agriscience teacher of the year for both Farm Bureau and the Michigan Association of Agriculture Educators. Mrs. Block said, “I tell the kids, even if you never win a single award, it’s about the experience, overcoming fears and doing your best. We are a family here and we grow together.”

With the past successes of the Ravenna FFA chapter, there is no doubt that their new program will continue to succeed and will assist not only students from the school but the whole community. Congratulations to the Ravenna FFA Chapter for all the accomplishments and good luck with all of your future endeavors.
“Motivation is the key to success.” That is something that Coy Hansen, a 16 year old Lapeer County FFA Chapter member states every day. “My SAE project has been a dream of mine since I was young, I have always been interested in competition,” states Coy. Hansen works very hard progressing his Swine Production SAE. Agriculture is far from a first generation interest in the Hansen family. Coy’s mom and dad were involved in agriculture and also held an interest in the swine industry. “My dad grew up on a pig farm that was production based and my parents also showed hogs in 4-H fairs”, explained Coy. “There was no way I was going to miss out on the chance of starting something that I would be interested in for a long time.”

Coy was introduced into agriculture at a young age, with riding horses and soon he progressed from walking to trotting around the barrels on a horse. After seeing his progress at age five, his parents bought him a horse that would get him just what he needed—speed. Working as a team with Ellie, taught Coy the importance of team work, but also hard work and determination, which prepared him for the success he has found with his swine production SAE.

At the age of nine, Coy was able to show his first pen of pigs at the Eastern Michigan Fair. Not only was it his first pen of pigs, but Coy also picked out the hogs himself. Together they placed in both showmanship and market class. “I knew this wasn’t going to be a hobby for me, I wanted the chance to breed and raise my own hogs,” explained Coy. The following year, Coy bred his gilt and used some of its piglets for fair. Those same piglets made it to the overall market drive. That was when Coy decided to buy some breeding stock. When he choose to buy his next gilt he decided to get her from a show pig sale instead of a market sale. Coy would later find out that this was a very good choice, as he won overall market hog that year. This however, was also the year he lost his best friend, his paint horse, Ellie. Because she was gone, Coy would no longer ride at the competitive level and instead, decided to invest and develop a solid genetic line of show pigs. Putting his sale money together with his brother’s, they bought three high quality gilts. At first, they were just raising them for the family but Coy decided he wanted to expand even more. Coy and his family now breed between eight and ten sows annually, averaging between 60-80 piglets a year. He has taken out a youth loan, along with his brother Wyatt, in hopes of growing their operation even further. “I am planning on growing at least 15 to 20 head in the next five years and just recently purchased three new gilts for the 2011 breeding season,” says Coy.

“My family plays a big part in what I do. Without their support I could not be as successful as I am,” said Coy. Mrs. Tammy Hyatt, the Lapeer County FFA Advisor, has also played a big role in Coy’s SAE. Mrs. Hyatt has encouraged him to plan ahead, set goals for himself, and helps him to see what he wants to get out of his SAE. Through his Swine Production SAE, Coy says there is also a lot of family time involved not only during shows, but also during the breeding and farrowing seasons, too. Family time is just one of the many advantages that Coy Hansen and his family have encountered through his SAE. Traveling to many shows across the state and the nation has brought many new friendships.

Coy’s dedication to his Supervised Agricultural Experience shows that he truly is “Doing to Learn.”
Earning to Live

It takes a great person to be able to touch someone’s life by impacting, influencing or inspiring them. It takes a truly amazing person to be able to say that they have done all three. Megan Merrill, an agriscience educator, has been doing just that for the past nine years at Springport High School. She has continually made a difference in the lives of her students, past and present.

Merrill grew up in the small town of Montague, on the west side of Michigan. Growing up in a non-production agriculture background, she knew that she had to take advantage of every opportunity that was offered to her. All throughout high school, she knew that agriculture was going to be an important part of her life. During her time in high school she had the opportunity to coach freshman leadership contest teams and she began to see her love for teaching evolve. Her ag teachers, John Schut and Clarence Rudat inspired her to continue following her passion for agriculture and teaching into college, where she majored in agriculture education. She knew that she wanted to inspire her future students, just as her ag teachers had inspired her. This has driven her to continually push each and every one of her students to believe that they can become whatever they set their mind to. No matter how high the goal, Megan shows her students that they can achieve anything. She makes a positive impact on every student, coworker and community member that she meets.

Upon arriving at Springport High School, everyone could instantly see her passion for agriculture and her students. That is what makes Merrill such an amazing role model for everyone. No matter what the situation, she always puts her best foot forward and is there to help. She enjoys teaching students the benefits of being agriculturally aware; whether that is nutrition education or leadership skills such as job interview or public speaking.

“My goal is to IMPACT students by teaching them the importance of being informed, because I know that I am an informed consumer and I would like nothing more than all of my students to be lifelong learners,” Merrill said. Her positive and hard working attitude has proved that just one person can make a lasting impact on someone’s life.

For the past nine years, she has worked tirelessly to build a strong alumni chapter within the community. This has gained her a much respected position within her small community. Her relentlessness and driven attitude have influenced countless community members to get involved and ensure that the Springport FFA has all the support that it could possibly need.

Merrill’s passion for her students, community and agriculture have truly shown that she is an amazing person who has all the qualities of an amazing leader, to Do More; Influence, Impact and Inspire.
Living to Serve

Amber Eagling has a true passion for cattle. "When I was eight years old my parents bought me my first registered Angus heifer from the Michigan Beef Expo. Her name was Jesse and I was so excited! It all took off from there."

Amber, a 16 year old junior at Alpena High School, manages her own cattle herd for her supervised agricultural experience (SAE). Her herd includes both registered and unregistered cattle which she will raise as show and butcher cattle. Over the years, Amber has saved money to purchase more breeding stock by selling calves she has raised to the local public. The money from these sales is invested in feed, new breeding stock, and other expenses.

Cattle always seemed to be a natural fit for Amber. While watching her sister in competitions all around the country, she was eager to join in on the action. With support from her parents, sister, and advisor, and an increasing knowledge of the cattle business, Amber has discovered the perks to showing cattle. She credits her family as being the inspiration to pursue her projects.

Now she wants to go a step further. Her goal is to start a farm for troubled youth. At this farm, teenagers could learn responsibility, trust, and hard work by raising their own animal. "My SAE has taught me hard work but also the rewards of that hard work. I hope to be able to share a strong work ethic with students and the kids who attend my farm," stated Amber.

Additionally, Amber has two other SAEs to keep busy with. For her outdoor recreation SAE, Amber races a team of sled dogs around the state. She fulfills her diversified livestock SAE with horses, pigs and cattle. Also, she is a member of her church youth group, 4-H, and the MUSH (Mid Union Sled Haulers). She was the first runner-up Miss Alpena County Fair Queen last year and served as the 2011 Alpena County Fair Queen. With so much variety, she has found her favorite part of it all to be her cows, claiming they make all of the work worthwhile.

Through her cattle based SAE, Amber has received proficiency awards at the chapter and state levels. This year she earned a Silver Proficiency in Beef Production at State Convention. She has also received her home chapter’s Star Greenhand and Star Chapter Farmer awards. Amber has competed in Greenhand Conduct of Meetings and Ag Issues.

While she is passionate about her own SAE, Amber says one of the best parts of FFA and having an SAE is the chance to meet other people and learn about their projects. That has made her FFA experience fun and exciting. She also believes that being able to help younger members will help them to appreciate the experience like she has. "I remember all those who helped me and how much I appreciated them."

Amber has served her chapter as the Junior Officer President and the Chapter Treasurer and is serving as Chapter President this year. She also has served as Regional Sentinel and will serve as this year’s Regional Vice President. In the future Amber would like to run for State Office and she plans to attend Michigan State University to major in Ag Education with a minor in Interior Design.
Did you know that Michigan is the second most agriculturally diverse state in the country? Our great state of Michigan is home to a large variety of agriculturally related businesses and on August 23rd and 24th the Michigan FFA State Officer team took a tour of many different business and operations in the central Michigan area.

The first stop on our tour was at an ethanol plant called Carbon Green Bioenergy in Lake Odessa. This ethanol plant is in operation 24/7 and nearly every day of the year. As we began our tour of the facility we learned that all of the corn that was used to produce the ethanol was grown within in a thirty-mile radius. It was great to see that this business supports farmers in their area through buying locally grown corn. The process of making ethanol is extremely complex and takes a team of highly trained professionals to complete the process correctly. When the corn arrives it is placed into a storage bin that is capable of holding up to one million bushels of corn. It’s huge! Carbon Green Bioenergy produces four finished products: Carbon Dioxide, fuel ethanol, wet distillers grain, and dried distillers grains.

While many people may not like ethanol production because they believe it will raise the price of food, in reality the corn used to produce ethanol is No. 2 yellow feed grade corn. This type of corn is not edible for humans, it actually creates livestock feed that is high in protein and is used all around the world. The grain ethanol that is produced at plants like Carbon Green Bioenergy is 59% cheaper than gas refined from oil and it is currently taking the place of millions of barrels of imported petroleum.

After our lunch break at a tasty small town diner, we made our next stop at a large dairy farm by the name of Double Eagle Dairy in Middletown, Michigan. There are approximately 2,000 dairy operations in Michigan and the average milking herd has about 150 cows. Double Eagle Dairy is currently owned by John and Karen Weller, however the farm has been in their family for three generations. There are currently 3,200 cows on their farm and the farm takes great pride in the excellent care and conditions they provide for their herd.

In order to make sure their cows are able to produce the highest quality milk, their comfort is made a top priority. The cows are housed in what is called a free stall barn. In a free stall barn the cows are able to move around freely in a large open area, which allows them to eat, sleep, and move when they please. Each cow on the farm has a small device on their back foot that tracks how many steps they take a day. This is very useful for the herdsmen and other caretakers of the animals because it notifies them when a cow has had a significant decrease in activity, which could be a sign of illness.

Double Eagle Dairy has a unique type of parlor called a rotary milking parlor. It can hold a large number of cows at once and they learn to get onto the carousel. As the carousel rotates their udders are sanitized and they are milked. The cows repeat this process three times a day. After the cows are milked, the milk machines deliver milk directly from the cows to a refrigerated holding tank to preserve the freshness and after that it is transported to processing plants. The average Michigan dairy cow produces approximately 22,445 pounds of milk each year. This means that they are making eight gallons of milk every day!

Next we traveled over to Breckenridge, home of your 2011-2012 Region III State Vice President, Rebecca Gulliver! Breckenridge is home to a business called Michigan Agricultural Commodities, also known as MAC. Michigan Agricultural Commodities was established in 1992 with only a dry shed and four spreaders. Now this business has a liquid plant, a
custom application division, a one million gallon 28% tank and a fertilizer outlet. MAC offers a variety of services to farmers including GPS soil sampling, gridding, scouting, precision chemical application, and offers premium plant food.

A large part of MAC’s business is dry bean processing. They process Navy Beans, Black Beans, Small Red Beans, Light Red Beans, Pinto Beans, and Cranberry Red Beans. Michigan has 270,000 acres of land that is in great condition for growing dry beans. The moderate daytime weather and the cool evenings are ideal for dry bean production, making Michigan number two in the U.S. for dry bean production. Once the beans are delivered, they go through an extensive line of processing. MAC is then able to keep the farmer informed of what is going on in the economy and help them make the best decision to take advantage of contracting opportunities they have available.

Breckenridge is also the site of an innovative project with a company named Invenergy. Invenergy is the nation’s largest independent wind power generation company and they have selected Breckenridge to have up to 150 wind turbines. Thanks to the cooperation of local farmers and landowners, Invenergy has been able to start construction and already has a few turbines up. Invenergy tries to focus on developing long-term ownership and operation of wind projects ranging in size from 25 to 500 MW.

As the first day of tours came to a close, we made one last stop at a greenhouse called Bonnie Plants. We were very happy to see that two past state officers were managing the greenhouse! Bonnie greenhouses have been shipping garden plants since 1918. In 1983 they were shipping these plants to 13 states, but due to the increase in interest in home gardening they now ship plants to 48 states and Canada! In an effort to interest youth in gardening, Bonnie Plant’s donates cabbages to third grade classrooms across the country and the students are each given a cabbage to care for and grow. The student who grows the largest cabbage will win a $1000 scholarship.

The next morning we made a quick stop at Bronner’s Christmas store and after we were in the Christmas spirit we made our way to Saginaw to tour the Hausbeck Pickle Company. Hausbeck was established back in 1923 as a small family owned business and is still owned and operated by the Hausbeck family today. This business produces banana peppers, pickles, and jalapeno peppers and distributes them to businesses such Sonic, Papa John’s, and Subway. The pickle making process is extremely interesting and there are several ways the pickles can be cut depending on what they will be used for.

The Hausbeck Pickle Company takes food safety very seriously and it is their top priority that their food is safe for the consumer. They have an electronic device that can detect even the smallest foreign object in a package of pickles or peppers and the machine will reject the package. This is a great tool for food packing plants to utilize.

Our final destination was a horse race track called Sports Creek Raceway located in Swartz Creek, Michigan. This was a very informative visit and we learned a lot about the horse racing industry in Michigan. For example, we learned that there are a few different breeds of race horses in Michigan; Thoroughbreds, Arabians, Quarter horses, and American Paints.

Wagering funds the Michigan bred horse racing programs. Part of the money made by people wagering on simulcast horse racing goes into an agriculture equine industry development fund which provides for Michigan bred breeder and owner awards among other things. Sports Creek Raceway has a special event where the horses race on New Year’s Eve. This is their most popular event of the year and it is well attended by people from all over the state.

The Michigan Agricultural Industry is alive and thriving and it is one of the few industries that has stood through the test of time. The many opportunities within this field make it a great career choice of any FFA member!
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1. This individual loves to secretly sing in the car when no one is listening, who are they?

2. This young lady is afraid of chipmunks, and her vehicle is named Olivia, who is she?

3. This individual has been a member of G-6 Farms since birth, who are they?

4. This State Officer has never broken a bone and walked away from a horse kicking incident not injured, who are they?

5. This young lady loves equine and shows at two county fairs, who is she?

6. This State Officer is one of nine children and has been speaking Spanish since the age of nine, who are they?

7. This individual’s family use to have 10,000 laying hens, who are they?

8. This young lady has been playing softball since the age of 5, who is she?

9. This State Officer has a herd of Milking Goats and enjoys a good dose of Political Science, who are they?

10. This individual has a 3 legged dog and a 3 legged cat, who are they?

11. This young lady loves a good run and works at a Mexican restaurant, who is she?

12. This State Officer loves learning and enjoys a heaping portion of homemade stuffing, who are they?

13. This species includes over 914 breeds, what type of animal is it?

14. There are almost 4 million of these in Michigan, what is it?

15. Most of this type of produce belongs to the Capsicum annuum species, what species is it?

16. It takes this piece of machinery 9 seconds to harvest enough wheat for 70 loaves of bread, what is it?

17. This species will double its birth weight within 7 days of birth, what is it?

18. Crayons can be made out of this cash crop, what is it?

19. It takes an American 40 days to earn enough money to pay for this, what is it?

20. Farmers provide this to 156 people, what is it?

For the correct answers go to: www.michiganffa.org/association/creed
Caitlin Pell  
**State Vice President**  
Chapter: Fremont FFA  
SAE: Dairy Placement and Veterinary Science  
College: Michigan State University  
Major: Animal Science Pre-Vet  
Favorite Sport: Soccer  
Favorite Homemade Meal: Lasagna  
High School Activities: National Honors Society, 4-H and Soccer  
Theme Song: “Change” by Taylor Swift  
Favorite thing to do with friends: Go to the beach  
Personal Hobby: Riding Horses  
Person looked to for strength and guidance: My parents

Britteny Bommarito  
**Region II State VP**  
Chapter: Springport FFA  
SAE: Swine Production  
College: Jackson Community College  
Major: Agricultural Education  
Favorite Book: “Oh the Places you Go” by Dr. Suess  
Word used to describe self: Bubbly  
Favorite Athletic Team: Michigan State Spartans  
Personal Hobby: Listening to Music  
Favorite FFA Activity: National Convention  
Favorite Movie: Sweet Home Alabama  
Favorite thing to do with friends: Anything and Everything

Addie Spolyar  
**State President**  
Chapter: Jonesville FFA  
SAE: Swine Production  
College: Michigan State University  
Major: Nursing  
Favorite thing to do with friends: Go out to eat  
Favorite Musician: Taylor Swift  
Favorite book: Harry Potter  
Theme Song: “Don’t Blink” Kenny Chesney  
Word used to describe self: Enthusiastic  
People looked to for strength and guidance: My parents  
Favorite Athletic Team: Michigan State Spartans  
Personal Hobby: Showing horses
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