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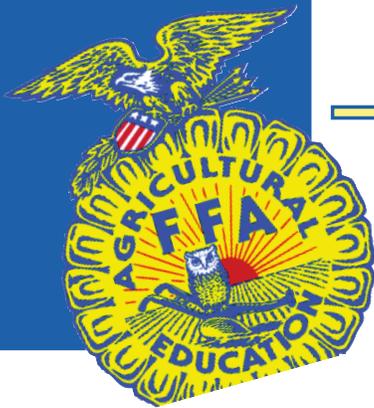
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# Inside Scoop

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## Important Dates

Nov	1	Broiler/Cornish Hen Weigh Date
	3-5	Broiler/Cornish Hen Contest - Fowlerville
	15	FFA Membership Rosters/POA Due
Dec	15-16	MFJ/FFA Ag Career and Leadership Conference - Mt. Pleasant, MI

# I believe in...



## Premier Leadership

### Matt Jakubik

State Vice President

SAE: Swine Production & Dairy Placement

Majoring in AgriScience Education at Michigan State University

### Jeff Peterson

Region I State Vice President

SAE: Beef Production

Majoring in Agribusiness Management at Southwestern Michigan College

officer profiler

**A** premier leader is someone who is so clear that the power and effectiveness of an organization lies within its members that she or he is dedicated to bringing out the very best in those members. Fellow FFA members, we are all leaders and others look to us for leadership. The question is then: what does premier leadership mean?

The best way to think about premier leadership is that it is based on wisdom. Where does this wisdom come from? It comes from within us. It is the divine spark that guides us as we live our own lives and lead others toward a brighter future.

Premier leadership is grounded in the principles that the FFA and agricultural education teach us, and because of this, it brings out the best in us and in others. Premier leaders not only know the right course to take but they take it for the right reasons.

Premier leaders are not perfect. They make errors like the rest of us, but they are always growing and continually learning from their experiences.

Life is a series of lessons that enable us to grow and better our selves. Within our challenges and dreams are opportunities for growth and

self expression. Premier leaders look at the events around them and the challenges they are confronting with an eye toward meeting those challenges. They search for life-lessons within their experiences.

The universe almost demands that we pay attention to what can change our lives. If we understand and appreciate the lesson, our reward is usually another lesson, for each lesson becomes a stairway to the next. Fellow FFA members, we challenge you to find that internal beacon that will light your way towards becoming a premier leader for the FFA, society and most important of all, yourself. ☺

### Did you know...

- ☺ The average net income for a cash crop farm in 2002 was \$19,032.
- ☺ Michigan is the second largest producer of Christmas trees, following Oregon.
- ☺ Ypsilanti was the first chartered chapter of the Michigan FFA.





## Healthy Eating for Healthy Kids

By: Lauren Burdick

There are no secrets to eating healthy. Despite this, it isn't always easy to make the right decisions when it comes to food. Recently, the issue of obesity in children and teenagers has made media headlines. The reason for all this attention is because this epidemic has more than doubled over the past thirty years. While this statistic seems frightening and should be taken seriously, steps are already being made to reduce youth obesity in America today.

Many programs, such as "5-A-Day" and the VERB campaign are being publicized in the national arena in hopes of minimizing the startling

statistics of obesity. Companies are also getting in the fight, with efforts of leading the journey toward healthier and happier youth.

"5-A-Day," a program designed to inform people of healthy eating habits, encourages the consumption of five brightly colored fruits and vegetables every day. By eating these healthy foods people will avoid heavily fat saturated foods and be more aware of what they consume. The sponsors of the program, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, say that achieving "5-A-Day" can be as easy as slicing bananas into your morning cereal and

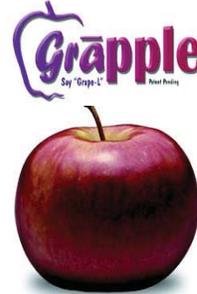
having a salad with dinner.

Additionally, "5-A-Day" targets children through a book entitled "There's a Rainbow on My Plate." This book, currently being distributed to school districts interested in the program, teaches children what types of foods are healthy and what foods they should eat less of. According to the program, children who eat healthy and stay active are more likely to continue these habits as they grow older.

Another step toward a healthier generation of Americans is the VERB campaign. Also launched by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, VERB encourages youth involvement in physical activities. Through television ads and their website, [www.VERBnow.com](http://www.VERBnow.com), young people can find information on sports, as well as receive tips from their favorite athletes. The campaign works with the professional athletics community to motivate kids to get outside and do some sort of physical activity, whether it is baseball, swimming or bowling, instead of watching television or playing video games all day long.

A key way to reducing this national epidemic is to educate parents on how to feed their children healthy snacks and companies like Get Fit Foods realizes this concept. There are many programs designed to help offer healthy snack ideas to parents instead of providing sugary snacks to their children.

Get Fit Foods, a company that works to combine eating healthy and staying active to reduce obesity and Type II Diabetes, has recently placed a new kid-based



innovation on the market. The highlight of their new health-based campaign has been the Grapple - an apple flavored like a grape. Targeted towards a younger audience, the Grapple was invented when trying to create a new and improved apple at a time when the idea of flavoring fruits was suggested and Concord grape flavoring was available, so the Grapple was born.

Co-owner of Get Fit Foods, Skip Johnson said that "By having people eat more fruits and vegetables and less prepared food, people will be healthier. The Grapple is easy for parents to buy and feed their kids as an alternative to unhealthy junk food." The company hopes that children will eat a Grapple instead of grabbing a candy bar or other sugary snack, thus learning to enjoy fruit as a healthy snack.

Johnson and his company add that physical activity is just as important to a healthy lifestyle as a healthy diet is. "Eating healthy is important, but staying active is also another ingredient to staying at a healthy weight," he said.

Some school districts have started to provide organically grown cafeteria lunches to their



students. In New Hampshire, Sunnyfield Farm provides nutritious lunch options to kids. Instead of a greasy piece of pizza or French fries, kids can enjoy peanut butter and jelly sandwiches served on whole wheat bread. This is just one way schools are getting involved with youth health issues and trying to create and promote better and healthier eating habits.



At Michigan State University, a program has been created to encourage children to eat smart as well as eating healthy. Called "Eat Smart, Eat Breakfast," it is a campaign to increase breakfast eating and improve overall health and school performance among preteens and teenagers.

More than 200 community organizations, including schools, libraries, health agencies, media and grocery stores, are working with Michigan State University Extensions' Michigan Nutrition Network (MNN) to reach more than 20,000 kids in the Lansing community area.

Amy Malow, a registered dietician and the MNN coordinator said, "Research has shown that kids who eat a nutritious breakfast have improved memory, problem-solving skills,

verbal fluency and creative abilities." She adds, "However, national and local research also tells us that the number of kids who skip breakfast is increasing, especially kids from grade 6 through 12. We know skipping breakfast can diminish school performance and lead to fatigue, headaches and other health problems." All of these programs and companies all have one aim and that is to ensure the health of America's

children. And while eating healthy isn't always easy, with the help of so many and the new programs, it just became a lot more fun.

Michigan FFA, we challenge you to become a healthier you - eat healthy, get fit and work together towards a healthier Michigan. 

### To Learn More About...

**5-A-Day** from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/5aday/>

**VERB** - <http://www.VERBnow.com>

**Get Fit Foods** and the **Grapple** - <http://www.GetFitFoods.com>

**Eat Smart, Eat Breakfast** - <http://www.mnn.fcs.msue.msu.edu/EHEB.html>

## Food Facts

Roughly 25% of all bottled water sold in the United States actually comes from a public water supply. To see if your water comes from a spring or from the town pipes, visit the International Bottled Water Association at [www.BottledWater.org](http://www.BottledWater.org).

Swallowing chewing gum actually can cause stomach problems. Dr. Joel M. Andres said that "Chewing and swallowing sugarless gum can contribute to abdominal pain...and diarrhea." Some gums contain sorbitol which is an artificial sweetener and has been known to cause intestinal distress.

There is a reason why Chinese food leaves you hungry an hour after you ate. Chinese dishes are, for the most part, all lacking in protein which is much more filling than the heavy carbohydrate food. Try ordering a dish that contains chicken, fish or tofu.

Chocolate really is good for you. In a study, chocolate was found to have four times the level of catechins - a type of antioxidant - compared with black tea. Tea drinkers have been shown to have a lower risk of cardiovascular disease and possibly cancer.

The average person eats almost 1500 pounds of food a year - 150 pounds of meat, 290 pounds of milk and cream, 35 pounds of eggs, 48 pounds of chicken, 68 pounds of bread, 125 pounds of potatoes and 80 pounds of fruit.

Peanuts are used in the manufacture of dynamite.

Frankfurter sausages were first created in China.

Half of the world's population live on a staple diet of rice.

In France, people eat approximately 500 million snails per year.

The remains of fast food restaurants have been found in the ruins of ancient Greece. The only thing that is new is the mass production of food, standard menus and recipes of fast food chains.

When the famed explorer Marco Polo returned to Italy from China in 1295, among other things he brought back with him was a recipe for a desert called "Milk Ice." The Europeans, however, substituted cream for the milk and invented Ice Cream.

# Our Motto in Motion

Supported by the Michigan Department of Career Development's Natural Resources and Agriscience Pathway

## Learning to Do

By: Victoria Holmes  
Journalism

Typical high school students may look forward to a little extra sleep during first hour, but that is not the case for a group of Bloomfield Hills area students.

Their first hour does not provide the opportunity for more sleep because after a short time in the classroom they are off to work. These students attend the Charles L. Bowers School Farm to take "farm" as a science elective course, which is an important part of the district's curriculum. They are also FFA members.

When they arrive for class at the farm, they are awakened by the welcoming aroma of cattle, goats, sheep and other farm animals.

The students begin their day at 7:35 a.m. with hands-on learning about farm life, not by preparing for math quizzes or listening to history lectures.

"The farm is a fun alternative to attending traditional classes as a senior in high school," Lahser High School student Kyle Clements said.

High school students are involved in a program designed around Agriscience. They receive classroom and onsite instruction in plant, animal, and environmental sciences.

"The greatest benefit here at the farm is the opportunity for students to learn through hands-on experiences," said Mark Seeley, Manager and FFA advisor of Bowers Farm.

Each day, 20 students arrive at the farm and care for their assigned group of animals. The students are split into five teams that are separated by horses, sheep and goats, poultry, cattle, ducks and rabbits.

Their duties include feeding, checking for any new pregnancies and daily evaluations of the condition of the animals. The students do the work, and whether it is chasing chickens or cleaning up after pigs, they are learning the responsibilities of production agriculture.

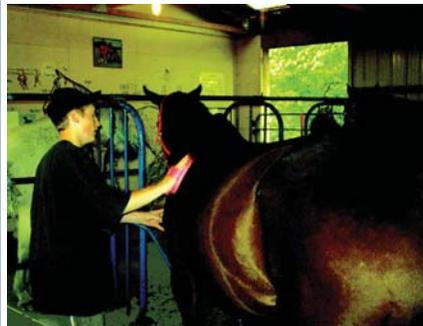
Becoming active on the farm is not a problem for

these model students. The farm serves as a land laboratory and a stepping stone for them to explore animal science, technology and possible career choices.

The Bowers Farm has expanded tremendously in staff, student involvement and importance to the District since its beginning in the 1970s. Members of the Board of Education started this program as a single project for third graders who would learn about garden plots.

Approximately thirty years later, the farm has become an exemplary

program offered to students kindergarten through twelfth grade. The Bowers School Farm offers suburban students a peek into production agriculture and great opportunity for them to learn and give back to the environment. [↗](#)



FFA NEW HORIZONS

## Entomologist

Entomologists are needed to help farmers and researchers produce crops and livestock more efficiently by using sound pest management strategies; to produce information about endangered species ecosystems and our environment.

In college, a major in entomology is the best preparation for you. You should take courses in biology, agriculture and chemistry.

For more information, check out: [www.ent.msu.edu/](http://www.ent.msu.edu/)

## Doing to Learn

### Building Skills for Life

By Nathan Baker  
State Secretary

The fall is almost over and with it comes the end of the crop year. David McCulla, of the Milan FFA chapter, is finishing harvest on his family farm.

David's SAE consists of diversified crop production placement on his family's 2,000 acre

cash crop farm. They raise corn, soybeans and wheat along with baling more than 40,000 bales of hay and straw annually.

David, son of George and Bethany McCulla, has been helping his dad on the farm as long as he can remember. He is always working in the fields whether it is with tillage or planting crops in the spring, baling hay or straw throughout the summer or driving the combine or grain cart in the fall.

This year, David also rented 70 acres of farmland that he farms himself. He did everything on his own, including planting the soybeans last spring to harvesting them this fall.



"Farming by myself has been fun and challenging. I have learned to be more responsible," said David. He pays all of the input costs, such as seed and chemicals, and keeps the money that he makes from the crop sales. However, he would also have to absorb the loss if he had a poor crop year and the crops did not yield very well.

David is a junior at Milan High School and is very active within his chapter. As a freshman, he competed in the Greenhand Public Speaking contest and received third place at the regional level. He has also helped in the restoration process of his chapter's FFA barn.

David was a chapter officer his sophomore year and is currently serving as Milan's vice-president and as the Region II Reporter.

"My experience in the FFA has taught me a lot about leadership and my skills. I will continue to be involved with agriculture in the future," said David.

After high school, David plans to attend Michigan State University and major in Agricultural Engineering.

From the farm to a degree in engineering, David will remember his roots of agriculture wherever he goes. ☺

## Aquaculturalist

Aquaculturalists raise a diverse array of aquatic plants and animals in controlled or semi-controlled settings. The purposes of raising these organisms include production of food, stocking public bodies of water or public or home aquaria and for biomedical applications.

Managers of aquaculture often have college degrees and need to understand water quality, nutrition, business, and economics.

For more information, check out: [www.msue.msu.edu/](http://www.msue.msu.edu/)



Nov/Dec 2004

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# Earning to Live

By: Dustin Petty  
Region VI State  
Vice President

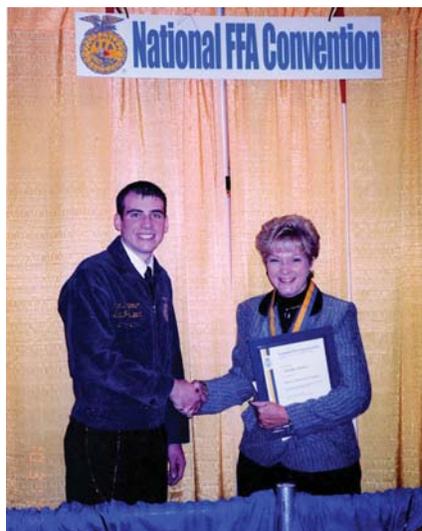
Upon entering the Michigan FFA office, one would see a warm smile and friendly greeting. A wall adorned with pictures of FFA members from the past dozen years was also visible. These FFA members all found a listening ear and motherly advice whenever they knocked on the always open door.

The inhabitant of this office was Mrs. Jennifer Decker, a woman who has kept the wheels turning for the Michigan FFA as its secretary for the past twelve years. This past October, Jennifer moved onto new opportunities as she was hired by the MSU Human Resources Department.

Jennifer began her work with the Michigan FFA in 1992, when she was hired by then State Projects Consultant Charles Snyder. In the beginning, her duties were what one would normally expect from a secretary: handling conference registrations and reimbursements, ordering supplies and answering phones.

Snyder (retired since 1999) saw something else in his new employee. He remarked that "Jennifer has always been more of a mom to the state officers and faculty than a secretary. Whenever any of the kids had some news or just wanted to talk, she was always there for them, like a proud mother."

Her job, however, was not always an easy one. As time progressed, her duties expanded into conference planning and assisting with state convention. Details that one would never normally stop to think of, Jennifer



handled with ease and grace. "She did it all with a smile on her face and a heart-of-gold," said former State President Ryan Peterson.

The popularity that Jennifer enjoyed was so strong that during the annual National FFA Week, the state officers would recognize her with "Decker Day." Past State Officer Sofia Iciek said, "My favorite memory of working with Jennifer was when my state officer team surprised her one morning when we decorated her office before she got to work. She did so much to help our team and many more that we wanted to show our appreciation. I will

never forget how surprised she was, and I will miss running up to the fourth floor of Ag Hall just to say hi to her."

Receiving the Honorary American Degree in 2003, Jennifer has obtained the highest honor bestowed upon a non-FFA member. Yet, with all the awards and honors packed away, what is left in the office is a feeling of accomplishment and dedication - not just to the association but to countless others who were touched by her. In the end, her modesty rings through as she sings the praises of an association instead of herself. Let us sing her praises. [a](#)



FFA NEW HORIZONS

Plant pathologists deal with the symptoms, causes, damage, spread and control of plant diseases. They can specialize in mycology, bacteriology, virology and genetics just to name a few.

To be a plant pathologist, you need a bachelor's degree in a biological science and a master's degree in plant pathology.

In high school, one should take courses such as biology, English, chemistry, physics, math and computer sciences.

For more information, check out: [www.plantpathology.msu.edu/](http://www.plantpathology.msu.edu/)

## Living to Serve

### Cleaning up your Community?

By: Caitlin Lorenc  
Benzie Central FFA  
Chapter Reporter

Close your eyes and travel to a land that has golden rolling dunes, deep blue waters that shimmer in the light, and lush green forests that are inhabited by beautiful songbirds of many different species. This is where I call home.

Nestled in northern lower Michigan is Benzie County, home to the Sleeping Bear National Park and the Benzie Central FFA Chapter. Every year on Earth Day, members of our chapter volunteer to clean the National Lakeshore.

"The Benzie FFA has assisted in this development for more than ten years. Students enjoy restoring the park, and the community enjoys it immensely as well. Tourism is a big industry in Benzie County and we help to keep it that way," explains chapter advisor Jerry Block.

Participants not only clean up the lakeshore, they also rebuild fences, reconstruct dune walkways and help control river embankment erosion. They also help in the removal of old dumpsites. The members

willingly do these long, tedious tasks because they all take pride in the beautiful county that we live in.

The lakeshore cleanup is not the only community enrichment activity that Benzie Central works on.

Every year, the Farm Bureau works with members of the Benzie Central FFA on a program entitled, "Ag in the Classroom." This program assists in allowing members to go out into the local public schools and teach lessons to second and fifth graders. These lessons educate children on the importance of agriculture in their lives.

"The kids are really interested in the lessons and they have tons of fun," said chapter treasurer Brittany Duford. "I



### Did You Know?

Wildflowers like Houghton's Goldenrod and the Lake Huron Tansy help hold blowing shoreline sands in place to help prevent erosion. Both of these wildflowers are found nowhere else in the world except in the upper Great Lakes Region and both are also endangered.

Michigan has ninety state parks, six state forests, three national forests and three national parks.

love working with them and seeing the fascinated looks on their faces."

The Benzie Central FFA has also prepared gardens for the community. Alongside the main streets in Benzie County, volunteers help plant flowers. The act is greatly appreciated by the communities for the beauty that it bestows upon the county.

The dedication the Benzie FFA shows in preserving the splendor of the land is significant. Future generations will not have to close their eyes to imagine it but will be able to come and experience this magnificence firsthand.

## Range Manager



Range managers care for our country's vast rangelands. From those lands, they produce a sustained yield of such things as plants for forage, wildlife for aesthetics and hunting, red meat and clean water.

To be a range manager one needs a bachelor's degree in range science,

management, natural resources management or ecology.

In high school, take courses in biology, chemistry, speech, English, math and zoology. Experience in agriculture (FFA and 4-H) is desirable.

For more information, go to:  
[www.canr.msu.edu/](http://www.canr.msu.edu/)

# Member Highlights

By: Melissa Smith, Region V State Vice President



Melissa Galloway  
Olivet

## Region 1: Melissa Galloway Olivet

How we get our food is a huge part of our life. Melissa Galloway, a senior in high school and member of the Olivet FFA Chapter has been serving up the delicious end product of production agriculture for two years now.

At the end of her sophomore year, Melissa started to notice a change within herself. She said, "I was growing up and I needed to be more responsible. I needed to see what the real world is like." At the end of that year, she got a job at her local Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Her responsibilities call upon her to work three to four times a week. She is involved in packing orders, cleaning, helping other employees and ensuring that the customers are always satisfied. "It has taught me a lot about responsibility and leadership."

Through all of her hard work in the FFA, Melissa has steadily increased the size of her trophy case. She has been awarded her Greenhand, Chapter and Outstanding Junior Degrees along with awards in Parliamentary Procedure, Floriculture and Scholarship Recognition.

Adding to her busy work and school schedule, Melissa is also very active in band, soccer, cheerleading and cross-country. Next year, she plans to attend Eastern Michigan University with hopes of becoming a physical education teacher. 📍



Sara Hammond  
Saline

## Region 2: Sara Hammond Saline

Sara Hammond from the Saline FFA Chapter spends a lot of time working on her SAEs. Winning an award for Specialty Animal Production shows her hard work and dedication in the production of beef, poultry, swine and dairy. She is also involved in Wildlife Management. Only being in tenth grade, Sara is showing her FFA potential at a young age.

A typical day for Sara starts off early in the morning by feeding and watering her animals before she heads off to school. When she returns from school, she starts her chores at around four o'clock, which consists of everything she did that morning in addition to cleaning out the pens. On weekends she spends her time doing extra things with her animals, such as trimming their hooves and training them.

Sara feels she has gained a lot from her experience with her SAE. "My SAE projects have taught me a lot. I have learned how to work with and show many different species. Mostly I have learned responsibility. It is important that everything is taken care of properly."

When she is not working on her SAE, she is active in her local pig club and is an ambassador for Washtenaw County. After graduation from high school, Sara plans on attending Eastern Michigan University for elementary education, in hopes of teaching first or second grade. 📍

## Region 3: Jolene Kirsch Harbor Beach

Jolene Kirsch is an outstanding member from the Harbor Beach FFA Chapter. Her SAE projects consist of steer production and growing sugar beets.

Jolene spends many hours working on her SAE projects. Her steer takes up the months from January to August where on a daily bases she has to focus on her animal's nutritional diet, cleaning its pens and training it for show. Jolene even takes time out of her busy week to clean her steer. "He is cleaner and healthier this way and I am able to check for any sickness he may have when I am washing him."

In her other project, Jolene helps her Dad on their sugar beet farm. She spends time throughout the summer checking for any diseases that may hurt their harvest.

Her SAE has helped her to develop many skills that she will need later in life. "It has taught me how to keep records, take responsibility and have patience for what I am doing."

Currently a senior, Jolene is serving as her chapter president. Besides all of her work in the FFA, she is active in her school's National Honor Society chapter and participates in basketball, volleyball and track. She is also active in the youth program in her church. In the future, she plans on attending Northwood University to major in accounting. 📍



Jolene Kirsch  
Harbor Beach

**Region 4:  
Chris DePue**  
Dansville

At the age of sixteen, an age when most teenagers would be dreaming of buying their first new car or asking "Would you like fries with that?", Chris DePue, a member of the Dansville FFA Chapter, was busy coping with economy variation of costs and profits.

DePue, a senior and vice president of his chapter, is in his second year of owning his own business, "CD Seed and Supply." In January of 2002, he took over the venture, saying "A friend of the family did not want it anymore and my parents and I saw that it would be a great opportunity for me to get the experience of owning a business."

A typical day in Chris's life sounds more like that of a businessman than a high school student. Everyday he checks his inventory, calculating how long each item will last. Each month he receives a price list at wholesale so he can determine what to set his retail prices at.

Chris has gained a lot from his experiences. He said, "My SAE has taught me the importance of keeping good relationships and strong ties with my customers."

Reaping the awards of his hard work, Chris has been in the top ten of his chapter for two years in the category of Star Chapter Agribusiness. He was also the second runner-up for the regional agribusiness award.

Besides the FFA, Chris is a member of his high school band. After graduation, he plans on attending Lansing Community College.

**Region 5:  
Katelyn  
LaTendresse**  
Chippewa Hills

As a little girl, Katelyn LaTendresse would travel with her dad to Michigan State University to judge Star Farmer candidates. She would see all the students in their jackets and openly wished she could have one too. Fast forward years later and Katelyn has the jacket and countless memories to go with it.

Katelyn, a junior in high school and member of the Chippewa Hills FFA, is currently serving as her chapter secretary and as the Region V District I Vice President. While incredibly active in the FFA, softball, and her 4-H club where she also serves as secretary, she makes time for her remarkable SAE.

In describing her program, she said, "I put up a 96X16 cold frame that I planted 420 tomato plants in. Everyday I make sure they have plenty of water and the ventilation was adequate. I often check to make sure that no pests were lingering on any of the plants. On a weekly basis, I prune the plants and readjust the ties." Besides the tomatoes, Katelyn also has a huge garden with pepper plants, squash plants, and seeded plants. With all of this hard work, Katelyn takes her produce to three different Farmer's Markets and is very happy with her profit.

After high school, Katelyn hopes to attend MSU to go into Agriculture Business and also hopes to show cattle in college.

**Region 6:  
Katelynn  
Jurek**  
Standish-Sterling

Katelynn Jurek followed in the family tradition when she joined the Standish-Sterling FFA four years ago as a seventh grader. Ever since then, she has been an active member and she has been honing her agricultural endeavor of raising lambs.

Since the age of eleven in the sixth grade, Katelynn has been raising Suffolk lambs to take to the county fair. She rises early each morning to water and feed them and does the same everyday after school. On weekends, she ensures that their hooves are kept and about once a month, she shears off the wool.

Through her hard work in her SAE and her involvement in the FFA, she has become more outgoing, confident and is no longer afraid to speak in front of a large group of her peers.

Katelynn has competed in both Junior High and Greenhand Conduct of Meetings, placing as high as third place on the state level.

Following her high school career, Katelynn hopes to major in physical therapy and continue a legacy of service.



Chris DePue  
Dansville



Katelyn LaTendresse  
Chippewa Hills



Katelynn Jurek  
Standish-Sterling

**Submit your SAE or one of your student's SAEs!**

Email Dustin Petty at [pettyd@caarrs.msu.edu](mailto:pettyd@caarrs.msu.edu)

# Say what?

Want to see someone you know or yourself on this page? See details below.

Regional Responses to Current Issues

## The question:

How has the FFA impacted your life?



### Region 1



**Macell Chiddister**  
Dowagiac

The FFA has opened my eyes to different things, people and friends that have all played a part in helping me become a better person. (2)

### Region 2



**Emily Ries**  
Sand Creek

The FFA has given me the opportunity to expand upon my true character. In any convention or conference that I have attended, I am constantly challenged to try new things and meet new and interesting people. (2)

### Region 3



**Robyn Szecepanski**  
Saginaw

The communication and leadership skills that I have obtained through the FFA are priceless. (2)

### Region 4



**Ashley Louise Clark**  
Roosevelt

Before the FFA, I had no confidence to speak in front of people. Now, I am not afraid to meet new people and use my leadership skills. (2)

### Region 5



**Stephanie Dick**  
Montague

The FFA has taught me to be a more effective public speaker and an overall stronger individual. (2)

### Region 6



**Adam Williams**  
Wexford Missaukee

FFA has opened my eyes to what is out there in the agricultural field. I now have the knowledge and self-confidence to aim for any goals that I may set for myself. (2)

## 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 State Reporter, Doug Albright at [albrightd@carrs.msu.edu](mailto:albrightd@carrs.msu.edu). So come on and speak your mind, so you can strut your stuff in this stylish FFA t-shirt.



# Kick It Up a Notch

Ready, Set, Go!



## Leadership is a Challenge... Overcome it!

Whenever we turn on the television, we seem to be reminded of the challenges that face the world today: war, political strife and widespread disease just to name a few.

As each generation arises, new challenges are there to confront them. We don't know what these will be, but it is important to be prepared for them. In the FFA, we are grooming the leaders of tomorrow so that they will hold the leadership skills necessary to face the problems of tomorrow.

In our own chapters, we have challenges that we are facing every day. By working together and understanding all of the options open to us, we will overcome any obstacles placed in front of us.

These are six challenges that we feel can be easily overcome through the use of teamwork skills that all FFA members should possess. ①



## Competition

Competition is what drives us as a state and we pride ourselves on leadership contests. Fierce rivalries and long histories exist between our individual chapters. This keeps the competition heated and level of play extremely high. Even though these rivalries make us very competitive at state level leadership contests, it can also unite us as a state.

I challenge you, Michigan FFA, to overcome the barriers that exist between individual chapters, forget about the rivalries and come together as one working together to continue our illustrious legacy of success. ②

## Work Outside the Box

Someone once said that "No one can know everything about everything, but you should know a little bit about everything." This is the thought that comes to mind when dealing with leadership competitions. When trying to become the best in something, you strive for that one specific object. Pro: You become very strong in that specific area. Con: You lose out on other subjects.

Michigan FFA, I challenge you to get outside your comfort zone this year. I challenge you to not do the contest you know you will win but to try that contest you don't know much about in order to gain skills and talents you otherwise would not have. ②

## Recruitment and Retention

"No, I'm not in FFA anymore."

"Yeah, I was last year but not this year"

"No, I don't think I'm going to join the FFA - I'm not a farmer."

These responses can be heard from many students throughout Michigan. One of our state's biggest challenges is membership. Whether it is getting members to join for the first time or retaining the members that we do have, there are chapters that are shrinking or disappearing every year.

I challenge each chapter to make it a priority to actively work to recruit and retain members. ②

## Acceptance

Our creed tells us to believe in the future of agriculture, "with a faith born not of words, but of deeds." In many areas in Michigan, the future lies in the urbanization of agriculture.

There are many chapters in our state that are in an urban setting and while production agriculture isn't prevalent there, they keep the spirit of agriculture alive in programs rich in horticulture and floriculture.

I challenge you, Michigan FFA to accept the changes and realize the importance of the agricultural new frontier. ②

## Finance

No chapter in Michigan is perfect - we all have something that we would like to overcome. Sometimes those challenges can be found in the finances of the chapters. When fundraisers that have been used for numerous years start to fail, it is hard to replace a tradition.

I challenge you, Michigan FFA to talk to each other and share ideas of fundraisers that can benefit the chapter treasury and the community as a whole.

Keep up the great work, Michigan FFA! ②

## Distance

Michigan is a unique state - divided into two large land masses, our chapters are as far reaching as the borders of Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana. Therefore, traveling to conferences and conventions are extra special events for our members.

There are benefits to our patented long trips. Memories are made while sitting on a bus for four hours together. You bond as a group and become stronger because of it.

I challenge you, Michigan FFA to not let the distance factor come between what you, the members want for your chapter. ②



## ALUMNI in Action

The Michigan FFA Alumni has been very busy as of late. Besides preparing for the school administrator's field trip to National Convention, the Alumni has been working diligently to increase its funding and support of the Michigan FFA. As a strong supporter of the FFA, the Alumni sponsors many events, such as the State Convention dance and scholarships for the fall conferences and Washington Leadership Conference (WLC) to name a few.

In an effort to expand its support of Michigan FFA members, the Alumni board is working on two new projects. Board members are in the process of working with the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) at Michigan State University (MSU) to develop a

scholarship program. For this program, the Alumni would receive scholarship applications from FFA members who plan on attending the CANR at MSU.

The FFA Alumni would determine the scholarship winners. If the scholarship winner(s) decide to attend MSU's CANR, then the scholarship provided by the Alumni would be matched by MSU to double the amount that the FFA member would receive for the scholarship.

The final details and agreements are yet to be finalized. FFA members will be notified when the process is completed.

Another new project the Alumni has been working on is developing a plan to start

a fruit cooperative for the Michigan FFA. This would ensure a greater variety of fruit that FFA members could sell. It would also maximize the funds that chapters would receive from their fruit sales. For information about

these and the many other programs the Michigan FFA Alumni offers, please visit the Michigan FFA Alumni website at [www.michiganffa.com/alumni](http://www.michiganffa.com/alumni).



The Hopkins FFA Alumni celebrated its 20th anniversary with a picnic at Comer Skinner's Farm. Approximately 100 members and family attended the event on Sunday, August 15th.

## The Cornerstone

### Michigan FFA Foundation News

FFA NEW HORIZONS  
N

While FFA Members and Advisors were working hard during summer vacation, the staff and Board of Directors of the Michigan FFA Foundation were hard at work coordinating the annual FFA Masters Golf Outing and the second annual FFA Race Day at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn. Both events proved to be lucrative for the Foundation and will help sustain programming for the upcoming year.

The FFA Masters was held at the Emerald at Maple Creek Golf Course in St. Johns. Nearly one hundred golfers participated this year.

The course included a betting hole, closest to the pin, longest drive contests and "Cream the Cow" contests and a chance to win a Chevy Silverado truck with a hole-in-one. While no one won the truck, it was a fun day, with the team representing Michigan Turfgrass taking first place.

"The FFA Masters provides sponsors of the FFA programming, Agriscience teachers and other members of the agricultural community a chance to get together in a relaxed environment and enjoy a day of golf, all while supporting the Michigan FFA Foundation," said Kate

Powers, executive director of the Foundation. "It is a great way to show support of FFA and have fun while doing it." The FFA Masters raised more than \$11,000, which will be used to support the 2005 FFA Regional Camps.

In August of this year, FFA members, supporters, and NASCAR fans gathered at the Michigan International Speedway (MIS) for the Cabela's 250 Busch Series Race and FFA Race Day. For \$65, participants received a grandstand seat, a pit pass, breakfast and lunch in the FFA Hospitality tent. In addition, they had the opportunity to win many

door prizes, including a MIG SP 135-Plus MIG Welder, which was generously donated by Lincoln Electric. The event, which provides general fund support for both the Michigan and Ohio FFA Foundations, had more than 315 participants and raised more than \$2,500 for the Michigan FFA Foundation alone. The Michigan FFA Foundation looks forward to a continued partnership with MIS and cannot wait for Race Day 2005! [🔗](#)

## Chapter Blitz



Ready, Set, Go!

## In Review

By Michigan FFA  
State Officer Team

Members Reached: 3,527

Chapters Visited: 104

Miles Traveled: 8,562

When the idea was first proposed to take a week and attempt to visit every chapter in the state, we were ecstatic to be given

the chance to interact with so many of the members in such a short period of time.

So, we set out onto the open highway, with an ounce of anxiety and nervousness, some props and a lot of aspirations.

Five days and over one hundred visits later, the twelve state officers that one served the state of Michigan are gone -



replaced with a group of people changed forever because of these experiences that we shared with the members. It was our mission to touch the lives of you, the members, but it was you, that inspired us.

Whether it was through a story you told us about your SAE, a shared lunch or hanging out with you after class, the twelve of us walked away from the experience more dedicated ever to serve the five thousand of you.

It is also not an understatement to say that the agriscience teachers in the state of Michigan are the most devoted and enthusiastic educators found anywhere. They inspire their students to dream and push them on, allowing them to achieve their goals - not only in FFA, but in FFA. It was so awe-inspiring.

Michigan FFA, we thank you. [👉](#)

## What You Taught Us...

"I've learned that nothing would be possible without the members of the Michigan FFA and their teachers. They are so incredible." - Ryan Kramer

"I've realized the true value of being a member of the Michigan FFA." - Matt Jakubik

"I've learned that we are more than just officers, we are role models, too." - Nathan Baker

"I've learned the importance of service and the relationships we make with the member."  
- Aaron Preston

"I've realized what leading a life of service is all about. I realize that this year isn't about conventions, the awards, or even getting to wear the jacket. It's the friendships made, the lessons learned and the people impacted." - Doug Albright

"I've learned that the members make a bigger impact on us than we make on the members." - Steve Darke.

"I learned that every chapter is different, even though they're all based on the same idea, the styles are different and unique." - Jeff Peterson

"I learned that everyone wants to be in the FFA, they just don't know it yet." - Jake Riske

"I learned that I want to be an Ag teacher. After seeing what the educators have the possibility of meaning to the students and their lives, I can't wait to make that same impact." - Nicole Welchner

"I realized that last week was the reason I ran for state office - to make the difference in the lives of the students, if only for an hour or so." - David Wise

"I learned that my region is so outstanding and has so much to offer that I didn't even know was there."  
- Melissa Smith

"I learned that the members are so diverse in the way they learn and the way they experience the FFA." - Dustin Petty

## FFA members preparing for their future in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources



Miranda Smith, Horticulture • Mallory Koglin, Agribusiness Management  
Amanda Sloan, Agriscience Education • Ryan Peterson, Agricultural Engineering  
Ryan Kramer, ANR Communications • Robert Kirkpatrick, Agriscience Education • Rachel Dennis, ANR Communications

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

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.

## and Natural Resources

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.

## has its sights set on the future.

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>