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Plan your Convention Experience Now

Sit back, relax, take a deep breath and envision the national FFA convention experience. You can feel electricity in the air as the music pounds and the laser lights pulse throughout the arena. Then, a deep, resonant voice announces the officer team, and the audience response reaches a fevered pitch. Do you have goose bumps yet?

The 78th National FFA Convention will be packed full of activities and events designed to educate, inspire and entertain you and your students. You can make the most of the experience by taking time now to review the *Advisor's Planning Guide* and creating a day-by-day plan.

Review the guide and highlight the sessions, career development events, tours, workshops, entertainment and other learning experiences you feel will benefit your students. Then, go back through the guide and put those events in a calendar format to see where they overlap. Don't forget to block out time to spend in the FFA National Agricultural Career Show.

You'll note there are three opening sessions. Each of these sessions will include a reflections message from the officer team as well as a keynote address from kick-off speaker Amanda Gore. Please note that these sessions are ticketed events, so you'll want to order your tickets early.

While you're mapping out your schedule, be sure to include plenty of time to travel from one spot to another, and plan to arrive at all sessions early. Each session will be pre-

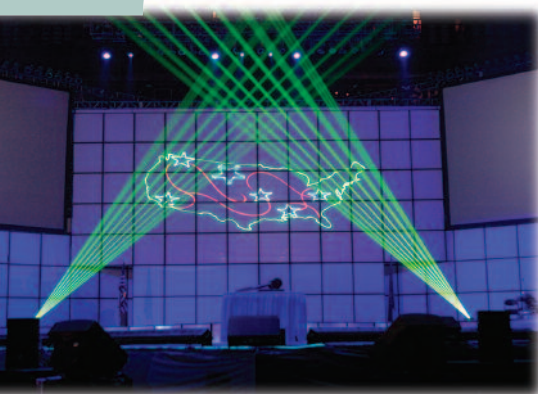
ceded by a high-energy, pre-session activity, and the house lights will be dimmed prior to each session.

Now that you have your schedule roughed out, consider what you can do to help your students truly absorb the convention experience. The true value of the convention is what each student retains after the glittering lights and upbeat music fade. Make sure you schedule some downtime at the end of each day to relax and discuss the day's experiences. These conversations will help the students process each day's activities.

Look back over the schedule and consider crafting assignments that will help students retain key information. Help your students focus their time in the career show by having them visit with a specified number of college and university representatives from institutions that offer degrees in their areas of interest.

You can also focus on specific areas of interest, such as agriscience. If you have students who are interested in science, make sure they visit the Agriscience Fair and stop to chat with the national agriscience student award winners. Or, maybe you have a budding entrepreneur. Guide these students to the national agri-entrepreneurs' display in the career show and have them interview the winners and pick up information to share with the chapter.

Lastly, consider what life lessons you help your students internalize by giving them a take-home assignment. Asking them to write out their goals, create a report or give a presentation can drive home the lessons learned so that they'll be absorbed and used long after the excitement of the convention fades.



Keynote Speakers Highlight Convention

Year after year, advisors and members alike remark on the powerful messages delivered from the convention stage. Some of these messages come in the form of retiring addresses delivered by the national officers. Others come from the professional speakers carefully chosen for the messages they can share with young people.

This year's convention features a stellar line up of accomplished individuals who will teach, inspire and entertain those who attend sessions in Freedom Hall. Here is an overview of these exceptional speakers.

Amanda Gore

Amanda Gore, who is one of Australia's most popular professional speakers, will kick off the convention's opening sessions. Gore has made a full-time career of researching, writing and speaking about stress and lifestyle, relationships and communication. She has found that the key to energy and happiness is balance – balance between our personal and work lives, and the balance of time spent at school or work and time with our families and friends.



Gore has a unique ability to entertain, engage and inform simultaneously. She's energetic, very funny and a master of group dynamics. You'll want to watch during the opening sessions as she facilitates a bond among the FFA members and guests in the audience.

Stedman Graham



Stedman Graham will take the stage during Friday morning's session. Graham is chairman and chief executive officer of S. Graham & Associates (SGA), a management and marketing consulting company that creates customized training and leadership development programs for corporate and educational markets.

Actively involved in education, Graham has shown a lifelong commitment to youth and community. In 1985, Graham founded AAD Education, Health and Sports, a non-profit organization of athletes and other civic leaders committed to developing leadership in underserved youths. An organization with more than 500 professional athletes, AAD has served over 15,000 students and has awarded \$1.5 million in scholarships. A former adjunct professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Graham currently serves as a distinguished visiting professor at Coker College. He also founded and directed George Washington University's Forum for Sport and Event Management and Marketing – the first of its kind in the country.

Sam Glenn

Friday evening's session attendees will be treated to a performance by Sam Glenn. They call him the "Chalk-Man," and for eight years, Glenn has made a positive impact on organizations all over America. Close to 10 years ago, Glenn was broke, depressed



and getting by working as a nighttime janitor and delivering newspapers to pay the bills. The only place he had to sleep was on the borrowed floor space offered by friends and family, or often in his car—until he made a few small changes that produced a positive difference in his life.

Glenn became convinced that with knowledge and understanding our choices build momentum and move us in the direction of our dreams, bringing wealth and inspiring amazingly fulfilling relationships. One of Glenn's choices was to change his attitude. He learned the keys to success through the ultimate teacher—personal experience. Glenn has transformed his experiences into powerful lessons filled with humor and insight.

Bill Irwin

The Saturday morning session will feature Bill Irwin, who, with his seeing-eye dog Orient, is the only blind person to have completed the 2,168-mile Appalachian Trail. Irwin's historic hike began in Georgia and ended almost nine months later in north central Maine.



Irwin continues to inspire millions of people each year. His unique message of perseverance and the will to survive engages diverse audiences throughout the world as he challenges his listeners to achieve their impossible dreams. His home-spun, self-deprecating humor and life experiences—more than 30 years in corporate America, recovery from alcoholism, the Appalachian Trail experiences and encounters as a family counselor—allow him to share his life-altering observations. FFA members and advisors will translate his message into their own life-changing decisions.



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The National FFA Organization is a resource and support organization that does not select, control or supervise state association, local chapter or individual member activities except as expressly provided for in the National FFA Organization Constitution and Bylaws.

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The FFA Mission

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

The Agricultural Education Mission

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

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Watch for the LPS Logo



The logo shows how this issue of FFA Advisors Making a Difference relates to Local Program Success, a national initiative to strengthen agricultural education programs. You'll see this icon on all FFA materials. The shaded apples show which areas the materials address.

Perspectives

Plan for a Bumper Crop This Year!



By Jeff T. Hines, FFA Advisor
Paola High School, Paola, Kansas

as agriculture instructors, we teach our students the importance of fertilizer, crop scouting and technical knowledge. As FFA advisors, we need to be reminded that the same things hold true when preparing for success within our program.

When you begin working with this year's "crop" of students, plan for a bumper crop! Each of us has a new crop of students "planted" in our classroom seats. Now is the time to fertilize.

Fertilizing

The fertilizer of choice in my classroom is excitement. I have repeatedly seen ordinary students do extraordinary things because they have become excited about agriculture and the unique opportunities for competition FFA offers. Students become excited about career development events (CDEs) when advisors are filled with the same fire and passion they expect from their students. Each year, I take members from our chapter to the national FFA convention, and we make a point of watching the nation's best competing on the finals stage. What better way to motivate students than to show them success firsthand!

Scouting

When crop scouting, strive to enhance the potential within your crop of students this year. When I was hired to lead a struggling program two years

ago, I did not picture struggling students. Instead, I envisioned students with a passion to compete and be successful in life.

Be fair in your assessment of students. Success in CDEs does not mean winning every event attempted. I measure success as individual improvement, and I challenge each of my students to do their best each time they compete. I expect nothing less than their best effort. The students have begun holding themselves and each other to higher standards.

So, how do I define a bumper crop? Three years ago, the Paola FFA Chapter did not finish near the top in any FFA contests, morale was low and few students saw a future in agriculture. This past year, our chapter enjoyed a great deal of success in CDEs, had high morale, and now our students see their futures in agriculture.

Harvesting

Last year alone, four of our seniors "harvested" full-tuition-and-book scholarships to continue their studies in agriculture because of their success on the livestock and meats CDE teams. Our recent success has led to increased visibility in the community, increasing enrollment and improved classroom performance.

CDEs give each of us the opportunity to teach our students pertinent technical knowledge while also teaching them to be winners in life. I challenge each of you to emphasize the value of CDEs in your program this year.

Would You Believe?

Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the FFA Creed

Reciting the FFA Creed has become—in its own, unique way—a rite of passage. While almost every FFA member (past and present) can still recite at least parts of the creed, most probably don't know much about its origins. Here is a quick history lesson.

The FFA Creed was written in the summer of 1928 by Professor Erwin Milton Tiffany, who was the chief teacher in the Department of Agricultural Education at the University of Wisconsin. Tiffany was developing an exhibit for the first FFA convention. He had prepared several charts and tables showing the various programs of instruction in Wisconsin.

Tiffany writes, "Somehow, I got the idea that a statement of ideals for the FFA might fit in with the exhibit. The creed is the result of that idea. It was lettered on sign cloth and included with the rest of the exhibit materials that were shipped to Kansas City."

When his creed was adopted in 1930 at the third FFA convention, Tiffany was pleased. However, he wanted to make sure credit was placed where he felt it was due. In a statement clarifying his thoughts, Tiffany wrote, "I have often said that it is the organization that has made the creed what it is, and it is the work of the members and the leaders that has made the organization what it is. Without these, the Creed itself would be meaningless. With them, it may, and I fervently hope that it does, contribute vitally to the spirit which is essential to achievement."

In 1932, Tiffany was asked to send a message to the national FFA convention delegates. He wrote, "The Future Farmers of America are required to memorize something we call a creed. Ever since thinking, hopeful men have inhabited the earth, they have been gibbering creeds. If any good has come from it, the virtue is not in the creed, nor in the gibbering, but in the nobility of mind, which prompts men to ponder over their ideals.

"If the creed of the Future Farmers of America is an expression of faith worthy of so vigorous an organization, it must be more than a part of a prescribed ceremony; it must be an active force of thought working its way anew through the minds of everyone who makes its words their own. I hope the creed is virile enough to engender such a response."

“It is the organization that has made the creed what it is, and it is the work of the members and the leaders that has made the organization what it is.”

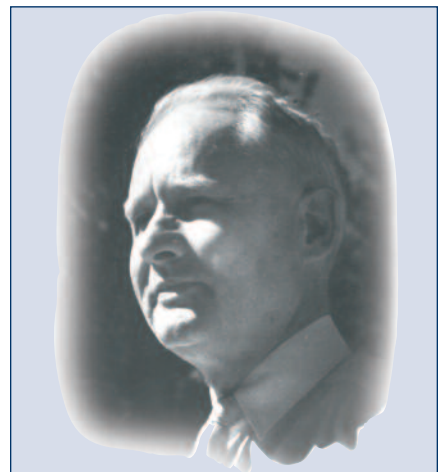
What inspired Tiffany?

Luckily, Tiffany captured his thoughts regarding the creed, and they are stored in the National FFA Archives. In an answer to a question regarding his inspiration for the creed, Tiffany wrote, "There is enough inspiration in each word of the organization's name to call forth the highest hopes, the deepest concern, the profoundest regard, the strongest determination to carry forward the ideals, never realized in full, but without which the farmer would remain forever the man with a hoe."

Special Tributes

During this year's national FFA convention, the organization will celebrate

the 75th anniversary of the FFA Creed's adoption. A special presentation will take place during the Friday evening session just before the Creed Speaking Career Development Event results are announced. In addition, convention participants will see "Would You Believe," signs around the convention hall carrying information about the FFA Creed and E.M. Tiffany. Additional signage and programming, along with FFA Creed giveaways, will accompany the FFA Creed CDE Finals in the Finals Hall.



Who Was E.M. Tiffany?

- Served as a school principal in Bend, Oregon
- Served in the U.S. Army
- Received Wisconsin State Farmer Degree in 1932
- Received the American Farmer Degree October 1937 (in absentia)
- Tiffany was never able to attend a national FFA convention
- Also wrote the lyrics and melody line for "Song of the FFA," as well as the poem, "The Soil," which appear in the national *Soil Conservation* magazine

Remembering the New Farmers of America

NFA/FFA Merger 40th Anniversary Commemoration

the 1960s was a turbulent decade in the United States. Civil rights, feminism and the war in Vietnam provided daily fodder for the evening news report. In agricultural education, leaders wrestled with how best to integrate segregated programs.

Following the Civil War, racial segregation in many states led to “separate but equal” treatment of blacks. This doctrine permeated southern society from the schoolhouse to the bus station to the diner. It also led to the creation of the New Farmers of America, an organization similar to the FFA that served black students in the segregated agricultural education programs of 18 southern states.



Adolphus Pinson, 1964-65 national NFA president, removes his jacket for the final time and presents it to Kenneth Kennedy, 1964-65 national FFA president, during the 1965 National FFA Convention.

Photo provided courtesy of IUPUI University Library Ruth Lilly Special Collections and Archives (NFA Merger, 1965, Mss 35).

That all started to change on May 17, 1954, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that “separate but equal” had no place in public education, and it led to the integration of schools across the country.

Societal Shifts

Officials in the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare responded by strongly encouraging NFA and FFA leaders to begin working on the best way to combine the two organizations. In 1962, NFA and FFA national officers held a joint meeting to discuss their two organizations and the long and difficult process began.

In 1964, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act that forbade discrimination in all public accommodations. Based on this act, the Department of Justice filed suit “for the orderly achievement of desegregation in public education.” This move increased the pressure on organizations such as FFA, NFA and others to integrate.

As the effort moved forward, the national NFA and FFA presidents made appearances at each other’s conventions. Effective July 1, 1965, FFA membership in the southern states was opened to all male agriculture students regardless of race, color or national origin. The NFA held its final national convention the first week of October 1965. The next week at the national FFA convention, a ceremony was held to mark the merging of the two organizations. Through the union, NFA gave up its name, constitution, bylaws and emblems, and it transferred its membership and financial assets to FFA.

Unintended Consequences

While the merger strove to provide equality, it didn’t occur without challenges. In too many instances, black teachers and students were not welcomed. Many became discouraged and left agricultural education.

Over time, people started recognizing what had been lost and began trying to restore everything from relationships to

historical records. The National FFA Organization established the H.O. Sargent Award in 1995 to remember the NFA and honor its place in history. The award recognizes students and adults who strive to promote and achieve diversity in agricultural education and FFA.

Convention Commemoration

This year’s convention will include several elements to recognize the significant contributions made by the NFA and its members and commemorate the 40th anniversary of the merger. The Thursday afternoon general session will feature special NFA programs. Retired Marine Corps Major General Arnold Fields, a former national NFA officer, will deliver remarks.

In addition, NFA historical artifacts will be on display in a special “museum” area of the career show. Two college professors, whose fathers were NFA members, have been instrumental in this effort. Dr. Dexter Wakefield, an assistant professor at Southern Illinois University, and Dr. Antoine Alston of North Carolina A & T have provided invaluable contributions to this endeavor. Their efforts will help honor those who suffered and fought against racial segregation in the past while helping diversify and strengthen agricultural science education today.



NFA History

- Started in May 1927 in Virginia
- National NFA was organized August 1935 in Tuskegee, Ala.
- The National FFA Foundation provided funding for all national NFA awards, similar to the way it funded FFA awards
- Concluded in 1965 with more than 1,000 chapters and more than 52,000 active members

Source: Much of the preceding information was gleaned from Dr. Dexter B. Wakefield’s doctoral dissertation, “Impact of the New Farmers of America (NFA) on Selected Past Members: A Historical Narrative.” Dr. Wakefield is an assistant professor of agricultural education at Southern Illinois University.

Agriscience Ambassadors to Lead Workshops

the “teach more science standards” drumbeat continues to grow louder as school districts across the country seek ways to improve their students’ test scores. To assist agriculture teachers, the National FFA Organization has developed an agriscience ambassadors program.

Seventeen specially selected agriscience teachers from 15 states spent a week in July at the University of Kentucky at Lexington learning how to incorporate more science into their existing curricula and make learning fun and challenging for their students. These agriscience ambassadors will train others to integrate science into the agriculture classroom.

“Most often, agriculture teachers are trained in areas of traditional, production-focused agriculture,” says Tony Small, Local Program Success team leader with the National FFA Organization. “This program is providing our teachers with new and unique ways to beef up the science standards in their program.” Small hopes to eventually have a trained agriscience ambassador in every state.



David Black's advanced plant science students use a microscope to identify a variety of color pigments in the chlorophyll of a croton plant.

Workshop Opportunities

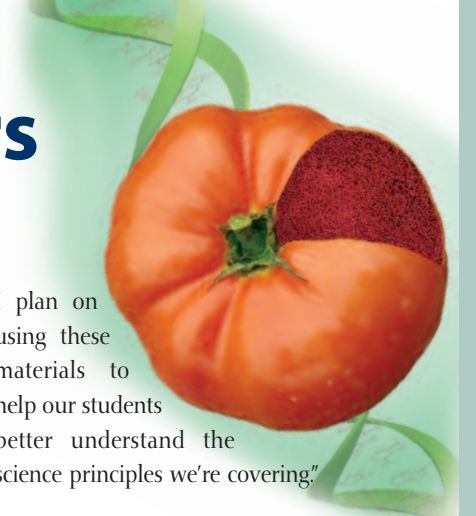
The teachers trained at the Lexington conference will have an opportunity to share their new skills during the upcoming national FFA convention in Louisville. The sessions will be held in special classrooms inside the career show and will run during the career show hours. Check the *Advisors Planning Guide* for details.

David Black, a veteran teacher who is beginning his 24th year in the classroom, says, “I’m really excited about these new materials. They do a great job of incorporating science in a way that is fun and engaging for students.”

One of the labs that Black looks forward to implementing in his program is called “Make it Stop Growing.” This food safety lesson delves into how to inhibit microorganism growth after a food package has been opened.

“The lab uses yeast as an example of how micro-organisms can grow quickly,” Black explains. “You can literally watch the yeast multiply. If you’re not careful, it will grow right out of the container. My goal is to get the students so engaged that they’ll share these activities with their parents and other teachers.”

Allison Touchstone, who teaches in Kuna, Idaho, says she’ll apply what she learned at the Agriscience Academy to make sure she’s hitting all the science standards her students need. “In Kuna, our students receive science credit for their agriculture courses.



I plan on using these materials to help our students better understand the science principles we’re covering.”

Touchstone feels the labs are a great way of helping students not only understand scientific principles, but also how they impact the world. “I’m anxious to implement a rice genetics lab that looks at specific traits and how to produce offspring with the characteristics you want. The lesson includes a global overview and how different traits, such as drought tolerance, can be used to improve lives.”

Touchstone continues, “The book, *The Material World*, provides a pictorial depiction of average, middle-class families in 80 different countries and how their lives differ. These types of activities help students understand why the scientific principle – in this case, genetics – is important.”

Free Materials

Black hopes each of the classroom sessions will be full of teachers. “As your students go through the career show, you’ll be looking for a comfortable seat where you can rest a few minutes,” he says. “Come on in to one of these workshops and discover a few ways to spice up your classes. These lessons are fun, easy and relatively inexpensive. Why wouldn’t you want to include them in your program? Besides, you’ll get a free packet of materials for every session you attend.”

The Agriscience Ambassadors program is sponsored by DuPont and supported by Lab Aids as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. For more information on materials provided by Lab Aids, visit www.lab-aids.com.

Visit Virtual Classrooms in the Career Show

this year's convention offers a plentiful menu of professional development opportunities for teachers. There will be three classrooms set up in the career show scheduled full of interactive workshops for teachers.



Roger King, an agriscience ambassador from Wisconsin, performs the strawberry DNA extraction that will be demonstrated in the Agriscience Institute classroom.

Agriscience Institute

The agriscience ambassadors will be presenting a series of workshops in this classroom (see story on page 6). Participants attending these workshops will receive free materials for their classrooms. Here is a brief sampling of what's scheduled.

Food Safety

Food Safety is a major consumer concern. Join us to investigate the ability of chemical additives to inhibit microbial growth as well as preventing browning of fresh fruit. You will also test for the presence of pesticide residues.

Groundwater

Half of our water comes from groundwater, which is increasingly at risk for pollution from various sources. Learn how to teach your students to measure very small concentrations of groundwater

contaminants using units of parts per million (ppm) and parts per billion (ppb).

Bt Proteins in Corn Samples

During this session, you'll explore the interactions between European corn borers and corn plants that result in yield losses. Then, you'll perform a protein test designed to determine if proteins that can kill corn borers are present in corn plants.

Generation Next

Investigate the genetics of corn plants by simulating a cross between the offspring of heterozygous plants. This activity exemplifies an understanding of genetics by defining alleles, dominant and recessive traits, observing phenotypes and determining genotypes.

Soil Nutrients and Fertilizer

In this session, you'll test fertilized and unfertilized soils for the presence of nitrates (NO_3), the form of nitrogen easily used by plants. You will also test the nitrate level found in the runoff water that is not absorbed by the soil.

Strawberry DNA Extraction

Join us for a look at a hands-on method of spooling DNA from strawberries—in a classroom just like yours! This workshop uses safe materials to isolate and extract DNA from a mixture of crushed strawberries, allowing students to visualize DNA and understand some of its properties.

DTN Classroom

DTN has been an innovator in the production and delivery of news and information since 1984. Content for DTN services is generated in their own newsroom by hundreds of full-time journalists and meteorologists, plus a carefully chosen selection of the sharpest advisors in their respective markets. They deliver information through a variety of Internet, satellite and direct data feed connections,



and provide teachers with highly advanced analysis and integration tools that help teach smart business decisions.

Learn through three rotating interactive sessions—Market Basics, Six Factors for Understanding a Market and Price Risk Management Strategies—brought to you by the experts at DTN. Experience how to enhance your agriculture curriculum through services provided by DTN and their products. Sessions will demonstrate how to use up-to-the-minute agriculture business and market information in your daily curriculum. Session will be hands-on and interactive through computer workstations.

New Materials Classroom

If you've been revving up to get your hands on the new educational materials from The CORE to see if they're the right fit for your classroom, this is your chance! Stop by the new materials classroom and test drive the newest tools in teaching leadership and agriculture in your classroom. Discover new ways to engage your students in your classes, develop strategies for unique ways for them to interact with your content and make efficient use of your time. There are no caution flags on this track!

Also, check out Lincoln Electric's latest curriculum, resources and technology. These tools can assist you in providing a safe and modern laboratory for your agriculture mechanics classes. This is being offered in direct support of our newest proficiency award, Agricultural Education.

Visit the workshops section on the convention website www.ffa.org/convention/ for scheduling information. On site, each day's schedule will be posted at the entrance to the virtual classroom in the Career Show and in the Mega Mall in East Hall B.

FFA Members Meet National Leaders

President Bush, Secretary of Agriculture Johanns meet with State Presidents' Conference Participants

f FA state presidents and the national FFA officers had the experience of a lifetime meeting with President George W. Bush at the White House during the FFA State Presidents' Conference in Washington, D.C., July 27.



President Bush spoke about his ranch in Texas and his love for the land. He described how the ranch is being prepared for a new enterprise of propagating native grasses to be sold for charity. Asked to cite a major influence in his life, the president credited the Reverend Billy Graham. He also stressed his commitment to protecting the rights of American citizens to worship freely as they may choose.

Discussing education policy, President Bush reiterated the need for achievement testing whenever schools receive federal dollars. Regarding curriculum, Bush said local districts and states should decide what is to be taught in local schools.

The president spent 40 minutes with the group, answering their questions and posing for a picture in the State Dining Room. The national FFA officers presented the president with a plaque expressing appreciation for his public service to the nation.

"The time we spent with the president was amazing," says National FFA President Jackie Mundt. "President Bush is the most candid, honest and respectable person I have ever met. He views himself as more than serving in a position of power; he is a contributor to the legacy and honor of the office. I appreciated his ability to show character and authenticity to the group. He is the best role model any of us could hope for."

I want to thank FFA members for being leaders, for making right choices, for setting high standards, for setting the example, and for serving the communities in which they live.

President George W. Bush

Johanns a Former FFA Member

Before meeting with the president, the group met with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns and other officials at the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. The secretary, himself a former FFA member from Nebraska, credited much of what he had accomplished in business and government service to the training and leadership experiences he received through agricultural education and FFA. The secretary added he was most proud of the fact that he was raised on a dairy farm where he learned "lessons of life" by caring for animals. The national officers presented Secretary Johanns with artwork depicting the 70-year evolution of the distinctive FFA blue corduroy jacket.

SPC Highlights

In addition to meeting President Bush and Secretary Johanns, SPC participants:

- met with congressional leaders from their respective states
- visited the Lincoln, Jefferson and FDR memorials
- toured Arlington National Cemetery and watched a special changing of the guard during which an FFA wreath was placed at the Tomb of the Unknowns
- attended daily leadership seminars focused on enhancing FFA and agricultural science education

On Friday, the group met with their congressional representatives. Attendees at the conference (state FFA presidents and one additional officer from each state) represented all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. They shared common goals of strengthening skills in leadership and citizenship, discussing national FFA business and learning more about the nation's heritage in the capital city. The group attended the conference to prepare for their responsibilities as delegates and committee chairs at the 2005 National FFA Convention. See related story on page 9.

The five-day FFA State Presidents' Conference was planned and conducted by the team of six national FFA officers. The state officers attending the conference will use the information and skills they gained to train chapter officers representing almost a half-million FFA members in more than 7,500 local schools.

The Chevrolet Motor Division and GMAC (General Motors Acceptance Corporation) sponsor the FFA State Presidents' Conference as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.



2005 National FFA Delegate Issues

each year, 475 voting delegates gather at the national FFA convention to conduct the organization's official business. While the delegates are the only ones allowed to vote, chapter members have an opportunity to provide input by testifying before the delegate committees on topics of interest.

The delegate work begins in earnest each summer at the State Presidents' Conference. Each state has the opportunity to submit issues and to send its president and another officer to the conference. This year, SPC participants voted on the importance of the 19 issues submitted. Based on that vote, the national officer team determined the following issues for consideration.

1. Review FFA's public charter and determine if changes are needed

- Submitted by: California
- Committee Coordinator: Mike Brammer, Penn.
- Recommend investigating if FFA should seek revision of Public Law 105-225 and ask critical questions, such as, "Should national FFA officers be elected by region?"

2. Establish a chapter award program for "American heritage" activities

- Submitted by: Illinois
- Committee Coordinator: Alan Spencer, Iowa
- Recommend establishing a new award program that encourages chapters to conduct activities that inform people about their heritage, rights and responsibilities

3. Re-establish the Work Experience Abroad Program

- Submitted by: North Carolina and Ohio
- Committee Coordinator: Robin McLean, N.J.
- Recommend re-activating outbound international experience programs for FFA members

4. Increase opportunities for middle-school members

- Submitted by: North Carolina
- Committee Coordinator: Jim Craft, Ill.
- Recommend programs and events be created to serve middle school FFA members

5. Update official dress wording in the Official FFA Manual to eliminate gender discrimination

- Submitted by: Iowa
- Committee Coordinator: Val Aarsvold, Minn.
- Recommend eliminating separate requirements for males and females in official FFA dress requirements.

6. Add a community service requirement to FFA degrees

- Submitted by: Texas
- Committee Coordinator: Dr. Ann Horne, Ark.
- Recommend adding a requirement for community service hours or activities to FFA degrees

7. Upgrade recruiting materials, especially videos

- Submitted by: Texas
- Committee Coordinator: Jim Scott, Ohio
- Recommend developing new and improved FFA recruitment tools, such as videos

8. Develop a biotechnology/genetics CDE

- Submitted by: Texas
- Committee Coordinator: Dr. John Ricketts, Ga.
- Recommend creating a new career development event focused on biotechnology and genetics



9. Increase the dollars earned requirement to attain the American FFA Degree

- Submitted by: Ohio
- Committee Coordinators: Chuck Parker, Calif.
- Recommend increasing the minimum dollar requirements for the American FFA Degree and setting a schedule that automatically adjusts the requirements based on annual inflation

National FFA President Jacquelyn Mundt appointed a delegate committee for each of these issues. These committees will meet and develop recommendations at the 78th National FFA Convention. If your students are interested in providing input on any of these topics, plan to arrive in Louisville in time for the students to participate in the public hearings.

The public hearings are scheduled to begin Wed., Oct. 26, at 7:30 a.m., in the Executive West Hotel (located at 830 Phillips Lane, immediately across from the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center). Please refer to the 2nd Edition *Advisors Planning Guide*, for more specific committee meeting times and dates.

To learn more about the delegate process and how to participate, visit www.ffa.org/statestaff/so/delegates/.

Focus on Farm Safety

FFA Chapter Hosts a Farm Safety Day Camp



Iooking for a community service activity that can spark enthusiasm in your FFA members, serve as a great personal growth tool and make your community a safer place to live? If so, look no further than the *Progressive Farmer* Farm Safety Day Camp® program.

"I attended a training session 11 years ago," says Chip Blanton, who teaches agriculture in Fort Payne, Ala. "The chapter decided to begin hosting a camp, and it is the best thing that ever happened to our chapter. I think every FFA chapter should consider hosting a camp."

Blanton continues, "This program provides so many benefits to our students that it's hard to count them all. It is an activity in which all of our members can be involved in some way. Some of the older students teach the lessons, while younger students serve as guides and help out behind the scenes. It provides a chance for every student to experience success."

What is a Farm Safety Day Camp?

Everyone in agriculture knows someone whose life has been affected by a farm-related injury or death. The statistics are sobering. Even more tragic is that most of these accidents could have been prevented if simple safety precautions had been followed. That's why *Progressive Farmer* magazine started a national crusade for farm safety 10 years ago.

At the heart of this effort is the *Progressive Farmer* Farm Safety Day Camp program, a one-day, hands-on workshop that teaches children and sometimes their parents safe farm practices. Each year, *Progressive Farmer* Farm Safety Day Camps reach more than 60,000 children and adults across the country.

Training and Resources Provided

Through the program, training is provided to key leaders in each community. In addition, t-shirts and give-away bags are provided for each child who attends

the local camp. In Fort Payne, the FFA chapter hosts a school-based camp. Each year, all the second-grade students participate in the day-long program.

"Our FFA members choose which topics to present, then develop their own lesson or activity using materials provided," Blanton explains. "We always present lessons on large and small animal safety, and ATV and tractor safety. Another popular topic is itchy plants and stinging bugs. The elementary kids really enjoy it, and my students compete for the chance to present the topic. Several have even collected hornets' nests."

Blanton's students spend some class time learning about leadership and organization; however, most of the time invested in preparing the lessons occurs outside of class time.

"It's hard to tell who gets the most benefit out of this program – the FFA members



Fort Payne, Ala., FFA members present a chemical safety lesson called, "What's in the jar?"

or the second-graders," Blanton chuckles. "My students learn so much as they research and prepare for their activities. Then, they just blossom as they practice and present their topics. It is very gratifying to watch them learn and grow."

Beneficial By-Products

Beyond student growth, the chapter receives additional benefits from the publicity the program generates. The local paper usually covers the camp, and last year the school yearbook included a spread on the event.

"Hosting the camp has attracted a lot of students into our agriculture program," Blanton explains. "I have had a number of students enroll in agriculture because they were introduced to the program during a safety camp. The program has grown significantly—we now have 119 FFA members—and I attribute much of the growth to this program. It was scary getting started, but it has been so fun, exciting and rewarding."

For more information about the *Progressive Farmer* Farm Safety Day Camp Program, including how to apply, visit www.progressiveag.org or call 1-888-257-3529.



Earning Scholarships Through Serving Others

Toyota Program Recognizes Community Service

from the county fair bleachers, Corey Longhurst looks much like the other young men and women leading lambs around the show ring. Look beyond the show ring, however, and you'll discover a young man committed to serving others.

A 2005 graduate of Weld Central High School in Keenesburg, Colo., Longhurst was recently named a 2005 Toyota Community Scholar—a title that brings with it a \$10,000 scholarship. The program awards 100 scholarships, valued at \$10,000 – \$20,000 over four years, to outstanding high school seniors nationwide. Participating high schools may annually nominate one student who exemplifies outstanding academic excellence, leadership and, most importantly, a commitment to community service.

Sharing the Wealth

"As a successful 4-H and FFA member, I have garnered great benefits showing livestock," Longhurst says. "I wanted to give something back to the program that has given me so much. My FFA advisor suggested I organize a community livestock show. I ran with the idea and began planning the event."

Longhurst recruited 25 others to assist in hosting the show. More than 600 young people exhibited their animals and took home more than \$6,000 in prize money. Beyond the benefits provided to the youth, local hotels, restaurants and fueling stations also fared well, serving competitors who traveled from as far north as Wyoming and as far south as New Mexico.

Life Lessons

"Service has taught me life's most important accomplishments don't feature

Ben Franklin, and they're not in the form of silver-plated trophies," Longhurst says. "Rather, they are those that make a lasting impression in the lives of others. I want to continue making a difference."

Longhurst plans to attend Colorado State University to study animal science and agribusiness with minors in Spanish and international development. His interest in international development stems from a 14-day trip to Europe to judge at the Royal Highlands Show and tour European agriculture.



Longhurst helps a youngster with his lamb during the community livestock show.



TOYOTA
COMMUNITY
SCHOLARS
PROGRAM

How to Apply

The Toyota Community Scholars program applications are mailed to high school guidance counselors each September. While each school system has its own system for selecting its nominee, Longhurst pushes FFA members to be proactive.

"Don't wait for the counselor to contact you," he says. "I would encourage agriculture teachers to let their students who are involved in community service activities know about the award. Ask these students to approach the guidance department and share their interest in the program."

Each participating school submits its nominee's application in early December. The Toyota Community Scholars program is administered by Educational Testing Services in Princeton, N.J. Each year, a panel of college and university admissions officials from across the United States selects 12 national winners (\$20,000 each) and 88 regional winners (\$10,000 each). For more information, visit

[\[www.toyota.com/communityscholars\]](http://www.toyota.com/communityscholars).

Giving Back

"I stayed with a host family in Belgium for three days," Longhurst says. "They didn't speak any English, and I didn't speak any Flemish, but we learned quickly how to communicate. I want to help improve global relations and help American agriculture compete globally."

Longhurst continues, "With a deeper understanding of livestock genetics, I hope to aid the global community in producing a safe and efficient source of meat. Genetics can play an essential role in solving nature's mysteries, such as BSE (mad cow disease). I have been blessed with many opportunities, and I want to give back to my community. I understand that with opportunity comes responsibility, and I look forward to fulfilling my responsibilities by applying and leveraging the gifts I have been given."

"These students reflect everything that is good about America," says Michael Rouse, Toyota Motor Sales corporate manager of philanthropy and community affairs. "Their dedication both to academics and community service is an inspiration to all of us. We are proud to honor and salute 100 of the future leaders of this country."



Local Program Success

Exploring New Roads



By Larry Gossen, LPS Specialist
National FFA Organization
Indianapolis, Ind.

i recently moved to Indianapolis to accept a position with the National FFA. So far, the learning curve has been steep. However, I love the challenge of learning – a new job, new responsibilities, new places to eat and shop, new roads to explore.

I had been to Indianapolis several times for various meetings, in-services and tours. However, moving here provides a totally different outlook. I have immersed myself in the experience, looking for the most efficient way to get to any destination and finding the necessary resources at the best price.

This is not unlike the experiences you encounter with professional development. You can spend hours of seat time observing, touring and even trying out a few things you have learned. However, until you immerse yourself in something you've learned at a professional development workshop, it is no different than just "visiting." You have to "move in" to really experience the full benefit.

Evaluate Your Needs

As you plan your convention itinerary, I encourage you to explore a variety of new paths to enhance student learning and to research the resources

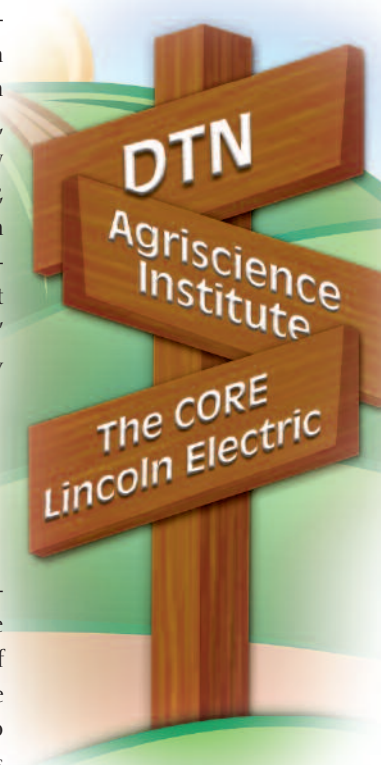
necessary to provide the richest experience for your students. Now is a good time to evaluate how well you have done and what areas you need to improve upon in constructing a professional development plan.

Schedule some time now to review the *Advisor's Planning Guide* and make plans for workshop opportunities at this fall's national FFA convention. Pay particular attention to the Agriscience Institute Activities available this year in the FFA National Agricultural Career Show. DuPont and Lab-Aids have partnered to offer six outstanding workshops focused on helping you develop a true agriscience program. These workshops will be taught by teachers who are using these lessons in their classrooms.

DTN will also have a classroom with hands-on, online demonstrations showing advisors how to utilize the DTN resources to enhance curriculum. These workshops will specifically focus on agribusiness curriculum and price/risk management lessons. A third classroom will provide you with new tools from the National FFA for making a difference in your program, as well as the new agricultural mechanics curriculum from Lincoln Electric. See page 7 for additional details.

This is only a sample of the convention opportunities of which you can take advantage. I challenge you to stretch your thinking, try something new and stay current with your course offerings.

You don't have to go to the extreme of moving to explore new roads. You can do that right where you are. Explore some of the opportunities provided at the upcoming convention. When you attend a training session, don't just "visit;" immerse yourself in the full culture of what it has to offer!



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Local Program Success is a national initiative designed to enhance the quality and success of local agricultural education programs. LPS uses the total program concept of Instruction, SAE and FFA and four strategies (Program Planning, Marketing, Partnerships and Professional Growth) to assist local teachers in facilitating successful local programs that meet the needs of students and the communities they serve.

Collegiate FFA Rolls Out Convention Activities

Career Expo, Workshops, Collegiate LifeKnowledge and House Party Planned

are some of your students or graduates collegiate FFA members? If so, Collegiate FFA has a robust program planned for its members during this year's national FFA convention that you'll want to share.

Career Expo

Last year's Career Expo met with great enthusiasm and success. This year's edition will be bigger and better for students looking for internships and full-time positions. More corporate participants this year will equate to more opportunities for Collegiate FFA members. More than 500 students attended last year, and organizers are hoping even more will attend this year's event.

The Expo will be held Saturday, Oct. 29, in KFEC Conference Rooms 101 and 102. The doors will open at 10:00 a.m. and the Expo will conclude at 2 p.m. For students interested in receiving interview coaching and résumé development, an interview skills and coaching program will be held immediately prior to the Expo from 8 - 10 a.m.

Students should pre-register online for the Collegiate Career Expo at [www.ffa.org/collegiate.cfm]. The participating companies will receive information on the students who register before the expo and can request a specific

meeting with these students during the event. This year the registration site will also allow students to copy their résumé to the registration form.

The first 500 students to register online for the Expo will receive a leather portfolio and 20 business cards created specifically for them. When they arrive at the Career Expo registration desk, they will pick up their gifts along with detailed information about all of the internship and fulltime positions available from the companies exhibiting. Students may also find many of the positions available posted on the Collegiate FFA website at [www.ffa/collegiate.cfm].

PAS Seminar

A daylong seminar is planned for the first 250 PAS members who apply. Key personal, organizational, career and community life skills will be the seminar focus and is available at no cost to the members. Stedman Graham will be the featured keynote speaker and will speak on the topic, "You Can Make It Happen...

Building the Bridge to Success." To secure your place at the first annual PAS Leadership Development Seminar, please contact the PAS main office at 317-802-4220 or send an e-mail message to [eschilling@national.pas.org].

Workshops

The collegiate workshops will focus on personal, organization, career and community development.



Workshops listed below are straight from the new Collegiate LifeKnowledge Program and will be presented by the 2005-2006 Collegiate Agriculture Ambassadors.

- Personal – What's this worth to you? Thurs., 8:30 - 9:30 a.m., CC Room 104 (sponsored by Agrilience)
- Organization – Everyone's reading from page 1. Thurs., 1 - 2 p.m., CC Room 101 (sponsored by John Deere)
- Career – This project is due already? Fri., 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m., CC Room 104 (sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred International)
- Community – There is more to this place than meets the eye. Fri., 1 - 2 p.m., CC Room 104 (sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred International)

All of these workshops will be action packed and filled with great opportunities for you and your organization. Schedule these workshops on your agenda right away.

Collegiate House Party

On Friday night, Collegiate FFA members will converge at Jillian's to mix and mingle while playing games, dancing and relaxing. Free sodas and snacks will be provided for everyone. Buses will provide transportation to and from the party. The buses will leave from and return to the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center throughout the evening. Four buses will run from East Wing B to Jillian's, 630 Barret Ave., downtown Louisville.

For more information on Collegiate FFA activities, visit [www.ffa/collegiate.cfm] or contact [collegiate@ffa.org].

Essentials for Expo Success

- Register for Career Expo at [www.ffa/collegiate.cfm] and special gifts or on-site on Saturday, Oct. 29.
- Arrive early to meet with companies of your choice.
- Professional or official FFA dress is requested.
- If you are under 18, a college ID is requested.
- Pick up registration packet on site.
- Bring 20 copies of your résumé for companies to review.
- Identify key companies of interest.



Illinois Teacher Wins National Award

Rich Lessen, who teaches agriculture in Delavan, Ill., was recently named the National Rural Education Association Teacher of The Year.

"This is really a recognition of our school because we're a small school and everybody has to work together. It could be anybody on our staff at the school," he said Tuesday while packing up to head to the Illinois State Fair with students.

Lessen is the first teacher from Illinois to win the award, which is in its fifth year. An agriculture and seventh-grade science teacher, Lessen has been teaching in Delavan for 28 years. He won the Illinois Rural School Teacher of the Year Award this spring, making him eligible for the national contest.

Lessen will attend the National Rural Education Association's annual convention Nov. 7-9 in Tucson, Ariz. He will make an acceptance speech and present a one-hour session on teaching in the rural setting. Lessen will serve as an ambassador for rural education throughout the United States from November through October 2006.

Lessen will receive a \$2,000 honorarium and the Delavan School District will receive \$1,000 to purchase instructional materials and school supplies. The award is sponsored and funded by John Deere.

Win \$1,500 in Commercial Competition

If you're looking to teach your students about marketing communications, then you'll want to consider entering Garst Seed Company's FFA Commercial Competition. The program has two components: the classroom curriculum that provides students hands-on

exercises and a commercial portion where chapters can compete for up to \$1,500 for developing a winning radio, print or TV advertisement. Last year, Garst awarded nearly \$7,500 to nine FFA chapters from six states.

This year's theme "Raising Leaders Through FFA – Cultivating Agriculture's Future" helps highlight the benefits of being a member of FFA. The ads should exemplify how FFA helps students become leaders and their role in keeping agriculture and related industries viable. This is the second year Garst Seed has sponsored its national commercial competition.

Ag instructors may register their chapters for the competition by sending a general inquiry e-mail to askgarst@garstseedco.com. Advisors may also register and download the curriculum, entry form and contest rules from Garst's website at www.garstseed.com by clicking on the news release titled "Garst Launches Second Annual FFA Commercial Competition." Entries must be postmarked by October 3, 2005. Send entries to FFA Commercial Competition, c/o The Integer Group, 2633 Fleur Drive, Des Moines, IA 50321.

The top entries in print, radio and television will be on display in Garst's booth throughout the 2005 National FFA Convention. Participating chapters are invited to visit the booth to view the top advertisements produced by their peers. Garst will invite representatives of the winning chapters to attend an awards presentation at the Garst booth during the convention.

Secretary of Agriculture Johanns Speaks to Illinois Convention

Former FFA member and current Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns addressed the Illinois FFA Convention in June. "My first public speaking opportunities came when I was in



Illinois state officers escort Secretary Johanns during his visit to the Illinois State Convention.

FFA. Now in my role as your Secretary of Agriculture, I am committed to ensuring a vibrant rural America for you and for generations to come," Johanns said. "As you know, there is already a lot of talk about the next Farm Bill. It will affect America's entire ag community. Therefore, I believe our entire ag community should have a say in the process. . . . That's why recently I announced USDA will conduct a nationwide series of listening sessions or town hall meetings. I want to ask America's farmers and ranchers, and you, our future producers, how our farm policy is working and what we might do to make it better."

Heather McLean, president of the Tennessee FFA Association, was invited by the secretary to appear at the first listening forum held July 7 in Nashville, Tenn. McLean urged Secretary Johanns and USDA officials to prepare the agricultural workforce of tomorrow by investing in the FFA and agricultural science education programs. McLean stated that to remain competitive, American agriculture needs leaders who understand how to set direction, influence others, create teamwork and manage communication in an international business climate. The forum was broadcast live over the RFD-TV television network from their studios.



Botany for Kids

This resource provides activities for teaching how leaves change color, how flowers grow, how plants fight disease and insects, why plants come in so many colors, tips for growing plants, and facts about fungi. Learn about seeds, composting, endangered plant species, fire, lichen and “plant hunters” — scientists who collect plant samples from around the world to trace a plant’s evolution. Access this resource at [\[www.nbii.gov/disciplines/botany/science.html\]](http://www.nbii.gov/disciplines/botany/science.html).

SAE Grants Available

Multiple grants will be awarded for initiating or improving SAE programs. See the list of available grants below. Applications should be mailed to the National FFA Center; the postmark deadline is Nov. 10.

Akey Grants: 20 grants for \$500 will be awarded to applicants with swine production SAEs.

Merial Grants: 16 grants for \$1,000 will be awarded to applicants with beef/cattle, dairy or sheep production SAEs.

Levi Strauss Grants: 8 grants for \$1,000 will be awarded to applicants within any SAE area.

Triangle Grants: There are approximately 16 grants for \$150 to be awarded to members with SAEs in either agribusiness or farming. Applicants must be from one of the following states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota or Wisconsin.

New Licensing Agreements and Fundraisers

The 2005-2006 school year opens with exciting new products, fundraisers and opportunities for chapters, members and supporters. Don’t be surprised if you start seeing the FFA emblem on gloves, T-shirts and other apparel at your local retail stores. FFA has signed licensing agreements with several top merchandising companies including Brahma gloves, Earth Tone Trading Company and International Sunprints. For all the scrapbooking enthusiasts out there, FFA has also agreed to lend its brand to It Takes Two, a Minneapolis-based greeting card and scrapbook company.

This year’s fundraisers were designed to generate high revenues with minimal effort. Visit [\[http://www.ffa.org/ageducators/html/fundraisers.html\]](http://www.ffa.org/ageducators/html/fundraisers.html) for more details.

A complete list of all FFA licensees and their products is available from Mickie Miller, licensing specialist, 317-802-4226 or [\[mmiller@ffa.org\]](mailto:mmiller@ffa.org).

Careers Resource

The “Earth Explorers Series” profiles an atmospheric scientist who flies through hurricanes, an engineer who operates a spectro-radiometer (an instrument on a satellite), an ocean scientist, high school students whose science fair project took them to Croatia, and other “Earth explorers.” Find out more at [\[http://science.hq.nasa.gov/education/earth_explorers/index.html\]](http://science.hq.nasa.gov/education/earth_explorers/index.html).



Earth Science Resource

“Earth’s Magnetic Field” is the focus of the POETRY website, which explores solar storms and how they affect space weather, the Northern Lights and us. A 64-page workbook of hands-on activities examines Earth’s magnetosphere and includes instructions on creating a classroom magnetometer. To download the workbook, visit [\[http://image.gsfc.nasa.gov/poetry/\]](http://image.gsfc.nasa.gov/poetry/).



New Jacket Fitting Tools

The National FFA Organization is in the final phase of the jacket restoration project. FFA staff worked with Clemson Apparel Research to create new patterns that will fit today’s students more appropriately and address the many fit concerns of the past. Beginning August 1, the new fit jackets started shipping. The 2005-2006 *Blue Catalog* includes a CD with information, worksheets and a video to show advisors how to measure/fit the new jacket. It will be critical for advisors to read the information about how to measure and determine what size to order. The fitting information is also available online at [\[http://www.ffa.org/ageducators/html/core_jacketfit.htm\]](http://www.ffa.org/ageducators/html/core_jacketfit.htm).

Destination Louisville!

the national FFA convention provides unlimited opportunities for members, advisors, state staff and alumni who attend this annual youth gathering. One can't help but feed off of the energy and enthusiasm of the more than 50,000 in attendance!

Everyone arrives with different goals and objectives for the convention, and thousands leave forever changed by the impact of speakers and events. Are you ready? How will you prepare? What are your goals?

In addition to all the things teachers and students see, the convention provides an opportunity for state staff members to attend the National Association of Supervisors of Agricultural Education (NASAE) conference. This meeting gives state staff members a chance to discuss

issues related to agricultural education across the nation. The opportunity to share ideas and solutions regarding current issues makes the NASAE conference a must-attend event for all state leaders.

I encourage you to make time to plan your convention itinerary for the 2005 National FFA Convention now so that you can make the most of this year's event. The national FFA convention offers so many opportunities for students, that you need a plan if you want to do and see it all! Plan the sessions you will attend, the tours your chapter will take and how you'll optimize your students' career show experience.

Chapters and members come to the convention for many reasons, including competing in career development events and receiving awards for member, chapter and community involvement. For this group, the convention is the culmination of planning, preparation and success at the



*By Joel Larsen, President-Elect
National Association of Supervisors of
Agricultural Education*

state level. Hundreds of people work thousands of hours behind the scenes to make each of these events a positive experience for our members. Please take time to say "thank you" for their time and talents.

The 2005 National FFA Convention provides an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of thousands of FFA members and chapters. The convention theme, "Living to Serve," provides members, advisors, parents and FFA supporters opportunities to grow, recharge their batteries and identify new goals and priorities. Let's make the most of it!



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Look for your next issue of *FFA Advisors Making a Difference* in October. It will feature stories on SAE programs, as well as provide teaching resources and FFA news.