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ICAN.WE WILL.

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ALABAMA

**Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays,
and a Joyful New Year to all of our
FFA Members and Advisors.**

FFA Members ALL CALL for Proficiency and State Degree Applications



by Cameron Catrett
President
And
Bryce Hendricks
Sentinel



“Take pride in how far you’ve come. Have faith in how far you can go. But don’t forget to enjoy the journey.” – Michael Josephson

As FFA members, we are given the opportunity to show our progression in the National FFA Organization by earning degrees. The degrees awarded by the National FFA Organization recognize our members’ hard work in their Supervised Agricultural Experiences, leadership and career development skills, and academic advancement. The National FFA Organization offers five degrees to its’ members: Discovery FFA Degree, Greenhand FFA Degree, Chapter FFA Degree, State FFA Degree, and the American FFA Degree. Each degree represents a different level of advancement in our Organization.

The State FFA Degree is the highest honor that any state FFA Association can bestow on its’ members. Annually, the Alabama FFA Association recognizes hundreds of members statewide by awarding them their State FFA Degree. To be eligible to receive the State FFA Degree from the state association, a member must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Have received the Chapter FFA Degree.
2. Have been an active FFA member for at least two years (24 months) at the time of receiving the State FFA Degree.
3. While in school, have completed the equivalent of at least two years (360 hours) of systematic school instruction in agricultural education at or above the ninth grade level, which

includes FFA traditions 33 a supervised agricultural experience program.

4. A student after entering agricultural education must have: a. Earned and productively invested at least \$1,000; or b. Worked at least 300 hours in excess of scheduled class time; or c. A combination thereof, in a supervised agricultural experience program.

5. Demonstrate leadership ability by: a. Performing 10 procedures of parliamentary law. b. Giving a six-minute speech on a topic relating to agriculture or FFA. c. Serving as an officer, committee chairperson or participating member of a chapter committee.

6. Have a satisfactory scholastic record as certified by the local agricultural education instructor and the principal or superintendent.

7. Have participated in the planning and completion of the chapter’s Program of Activities.

8. Have participated in at least five different FFA activities above the chapter level.

9. Have participated in at least 25 hours of community service, within at least two different community service activities. These hours are in addition to and cannot be duplicated as paid or unpaid supervised agricultural experience hours.

Receiving a state degree is a great honor and wonderful opportunity to showcase your skills and advancement in the organization. State Degree Applications will be due February 15, 2018 to the district specialists. The State FFA Degree Ceremony will be held during the fifth and final session of the 90th Alabama FFA State Convention.

Other ways to get involved and show your progression through National FFA Organization is through SAE Programs. An SAE or supervised agricultural experience is an opportunity for FFA members to take classroom instruction and apply it through hands-on projects. Students are supervised by their agriculture instructors throughout the course of their project. The ultimate goal of SAEs are for students to be able to learn more about different agricultural career clusters that they are interested in. There are four types of SAE programs that FFA members can establish. These include entrepreneurship, placement, research, and exploratory SAEs. Our SAE programs are based around beef cattle production and entrepreneurship. We have been able to take the knowledge learned in our animal science classes and establish our own herds of British beef cattle. These projects have not only allowed us to become more educated about the industry, but also given us a career pathway.

There are numerous benefits for FFA members who participate and engage in SAE programs. One benefit is that they can apply for proficiency awards annually. Once FFA members have created a solid foundation in their SAE, they can apply for agricultural proficiency awards on the state level. These awards honor those members who have gone above and beyond to gain extensive skills that can be applied in their future careers. There are forty-seven areas that students can compete in including Agricultural Sales, Swine Production, and so many more. The diversity of SAEs is astounding, allowing FFA members to truly create a project that they are interested and passionate about. Alabama FFA members, we challenge you to get engaged in a Supervised Agricultural Experience. Strengthen your project, apply for proficiency awards, and see you in the winners' circle in June!

Serve Always,

Cameron and Bryce



The Alabama FFA State Degree is the Highest Honor the Alabama FFA Association can award its members.



FFA takes project based learning to new heights with the FFA Proficiency and State FFA Degree Awards Programs. These awards exemplify the three circle model of Agriscience Education.



FFA Members Can Help in Our State Service Projects

By Gracen Sims
Secretary

Alabama FFA Association is pleased to announce our 2017 State Service Project-*Operation Gratitude*! FFA members will have the unique opportunity to reach out to our heroes at home and worldwide to show gratitude for our country's service members, veterans, and first responders. Chapters can participate in many ways! Members can write letters throughout the year and turn them in at the letter drop station during the 90th Annual Alabama FFA State Convention, or participants can write letters on site during state convention in June. All those in attendance at State Convention are welcome and encouraged to participate as we honor and support our troops, veterans, and service members.

At the close of the 90th Annual Alabama State Convention, all letters will be shipped to Operation Gratitude located in California, where they will then be distributed to our service members along with care packages.

Handwritten letters are often the most cherished item in the care packages and are greatly appreciated by the recipients. Alabama FFA members will work together to show gratitude and appreciation to those who serve our communities and country. Please visit www.operationgratitude.com to learn more about Operation Gratitude letter writing guidelines and tips.





by Jasey Black
Treasurer

ALABAMA FFA WINTER ALUMNI CONFERENCE

Each year in November, the Alabama Farmers Federation sponsors a conference for middle and high schoolers at the Alabama 4H Center in Columbiana. This conference is called the Alabama Winter Alumni Conference or “AWAC.” Your state officers attended this conference as facilitators in collaboration with the Farmers Federation.

Past National officer Wiley Bailey kicked off the conference by having the state officers split into teams with their respective group of students and started talking about what they hoped to gain from the conference as well as using our “question ball” to get to know each other. Then, the teams went head to head in competition. We continued pool play in the dodgeball tournament and then it was time for the workshops. The officers split into groups of two (Gracen and Jasey, Cameron and Bryce, and Will and John) Mine and Gracen’s workshop was based on teamwork and being the best image of FFA that you can be. Cameron and Bryce centered their workshop around promoting the brand of the National FFA Organization. Will and John were given the responsibility of guiding

the students to their respective workshop rooms and getting them excited for the task ahead. This of course included wearing sombreros for Will Jordan.

After finishing our workshops, we had dinner and then completed the dodgeball tournament. We ended the night with Reflections given by the state officers where we encouraged candid conversations about what FFA means to each of us and raised the question of “Do we truly believe in the future of agriculture?” Our second and final day of the conference consisted of participating in the ropes course facilitated by the staff of the 4H center. This course consists of team building exercises as well as strenuous physical obstacles that help you realize your participation and dedication is essential to a team’s success. Our group had lots of fun going through each obstacle and learning what we can do to be a part of the collective meeting of a goal.

Once we completed the ropes course, it was time to conclude the conference. In our final session we wrapped up all of the lessons we learned throughout the program and said our goodbyes. Your state officers were honored to participate in this conference and on behalf of all those who participated we would like to thank the Alabama Farmers Federation for sponsoring this event and continuing its success.



by John Crawford, Vice President

State Officer Christmas Q&A

What's your favorite Christmas movie?

Cameron: *It's a Wonderful Life*

John: *A Christmas Story*

Gracen: *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas*

Jasey: *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*

Will: *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*

Bryce: *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas*

What's your favorite Christmas tradition?

Cameron: My favorite holiday tradition is going to my granny's house on Christmas Day to enjoy lunch and a very competitive game of "Dirty Santa" with my family.

John: My mom gets me and my siblings a new set of pajamas every Christmas Eve so we can wear them the night before the 25th! Even as I grow older, I still love to keep the tradition from when we were children.

Gracen: My favorite Christmas tradition is making gingerbread houses with my family.

Jasey: My favorite tradition is going to my grandmother's for a Christmas breakfast.

Will: Every year my family reads Luke 2, the true Christmas story, on Christmas morning.

Bryce: My favorite Christmas tradition is always taking down the decorations on Christmas Day!

What's your favorite Christmas gift received?

Cameron: A trip to the National Western Stock Show in Denver, Colorado.

John: Last year I received a Hebrew/Greek Interlinear Bible; it has been extremely helpful in studying and is something I will always cherish.

Gracen: My favorite Christmas present ever received is a pair of sapphire earrings from my grandmother.

Jasey: When I was nine, I got this baby doll that I carried with me everywhere for years!

Will: I'm not sure; I have received some good ones. I really enjoy spending time with my family, some you may not see often, and really savoring the true Reason for the season.

Bryce: My favorite Christmas gift received was coal.

Merry Christmas, Alabama FFA!



A special thank you to www.wiblog.it for the use of the borders and backgrounds in this issue.

Alabama State Department of Education, Ed Richardson, Interim State Superintendent of Education

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