FFA, for many, has different meanings. For each individual, this organization brings different moments and memories to mind. This week, I have had the opportunity to visit five different chapters in celebration of National FFA Week. As I reflect upon the busy week of traveling and speaking to classes, I started to realize just how often I was asked why I was involved in FFA. While visiting chapters, I have realized that each and every member has a different FFA story, just as unique as their personality itself. So what is my FFA story? Why am I involved? What encouraged me to run for a district officer position? I am not originally from North Alabama, I only moved here during the summer before I began my seventh grade at a new school, and a high school at that! I had no clue what to expect and I was so worried. I only knew one person at this new school: the ag teacher and FFA advisor, Mr. Alldredge. To say the least, I struggled to fit in at this new school. Truth be told, I didn’t have many friends, and I felt totally and completely lost and out of place. The summer before beginning my seventh-grade year, I remember my ag teacher telling me that I would be on the horse judging team and that I wasn’t getting out of it. My first year in FFA, I competed as a seventh-grader at the state contest, but I had no clue what I was getting myself into. I had judged horses before so I knew what to expect when it came to the contest, but I still hadn’t grasped the concept of FFA itself. I thought it was all about the banners, all about how we did in the contest, all about winning. I was wrong. That year my team was second place, and I was beyond excited, but I took home much more than a banner that year. As I sat in the audience at the state convention, I began realizing that FFA is more than just banners, FFA is more than just farm kids, FFA is something I love. Following my first state convention, I left Montgomery with a passion, a drive for an organization I was fairly unfamiliar with. I spent the next three years working to learn as much as I could about FFA and different ways I could get involved and serve others. I began by serving as a chapter officer and finally worked up enough confidence to run for a district officer position. The opportunities this organization has provided me has been absolutely unbelievable. The experiences I have had and the people I have met have assured me of the fact that FFA is more than banners. FFA is leadership, growth, family, fun, and unforgettable experiences.

Thank you, Millie-Grace Drake
2019-2020 North District President
Like every year since 1948, FFA members around the nation celebrated FFA Week. FFA Week is a time for us to appreciate and spread the word about what FFA has done for its members. Chapters all across the North District celebrated this special occasion with a variety of different activities. Some chapters held Ag olympics, where members competed in different games. Other chapters held cookouts to give back to their members. While each chapter has their own special events for FFA week, it is important to realize that FFA week isn’t just a time for games, cookouts, or whatever your chapter does. It is a time to really appreciate what FFA has done for us all. Through this organization, I have been given the opportunity to meet many people and go places I never thought I would. I am very thankful for these opportunities, and without FFA, I would have never gotten to experience them. So next FFA week, make sure to keep in mind that it is fun to take a break from normal Ag class activities, but the main purpose of FFA week is to observe the importance of this organization that we all appreciate.

Thank you, Gavin Lee 2019-2020 North District Vice President
Secretary's Newsletter

As a district officer, I have had the chance to visit a lot of great FFA chapters and to meet a lot of engaged FFA members. I had never had a chance to see what it was like to be member of another chapter, until now. One chapter I visited was the Spring Garden FFA Chapter. My expectations were exceeded as soon as I walked into the classroom. Their members were very engaged within my facilitation and they were not scared to ask questions if they had any. I also had the chance to meet with their officer team and tell them what being a district officer was like. They even had developed a newsletter that was very similar to that of the North District. I believe that Mr. Miller has done a great job with his classes. They are very knowledgeable of FFA and agriculture. Another chapter that I have visited is the Centre FFA Chapter. I have known Mr. Kincer ever since I was in the 10th grade whenever he did his student teaching at my FFA chapter. So whenever he became an ag-teacher in one of my counties, I knew that I would have to go visit his chapter. Just like Spring Garden, his classes were very attentive to what I was saying. I taught them about the 3 circle model and they seemed to understand it very well. We played several team building games and they got really into the game of concentration. I am very proud of the Centre FFA Chapter because they all had a positive attitude and they worked very well together. The last chapter that I have visited is the Cedar Bluff FFA Chapter. I had the opportunity to talk with their newest FFA members. They had only been in the class for a week or two when I came, so I got to actually teach them about FFA. I spent most of my time telling them about SAEs. I helped them to figure out their SAE that they were going to use for the rest of their FFA journey. This made me feel like I was really important to them. They were all very hard working and kind students, and they did everything asked of them. They even were able to answer a few questions at the end about SAEs. I think that Mrs. Hill has worked really hard with her students and that her FFA member will go far in life.

Stay positive and be your best, Alexis Stevens 2019-2020 North District Secretary
With spring approaching, district elimination is on its way. The district officers and staff are working their hardest to make it the best for all attendees. On February 22, all the district officers met together at Cullman Middle School to begin the long preparation. We reviewed the official script and prepared to host a wonderful event for all North District attendees. Your officer team is hard at work ironing out all of the details for the District Eliminations to be hosted at Wallace State on April 17th. Regional elimination dates have been set for Creed Speaking, Prepared Speech, and Extemporaneous Speaking. Congratulations and good luck to all of the members that have qualified to participate in regional elimination. We look forward to seeing the top competitors at District Elimination. Also, we are looking forward to the Livestock judging CDE elimination that will be held on March 14th in Cullman, Al. These teams will be competing to represent the North District at state elimination in June. Good luck to all of the teams representing their chapters. We look forward to seeing everyone in just a little over a month. The stage is set for a great day at Wallace State on April 17, 2020 for District Elimination.

Thank you, Leeanna Burkhalter, 2019-2020 North District Treasurer
On Saturday March 7th 2020, several of the District and State Officer Candidates gathered at Auburn University for a workshop to prep for the upcoming interviews. At the start of the day we all met in the Comer Building at Auburn in one of the classrooms where all the candidates including myself were buzzing with nerves and excitement. After that we jumped right in with the question “WHY DO WE WANT THIS?” To start our dive into the pressing question the State Officers shared their FFA stories and their reasoning for being a representative of this wonderful organization. Following their stories, all of the candidates were tasked with writing and sharing their reasoning for running with the room. Once all of us had shared we dove into them even further and discussed what good reasoning was. After lunch we all came back refreshed and ready for more and oh did we get it. When we returned the walls were lined with former district and state officers and the FFA National Western Region Vice President Lyle Logemann as even there! We then divided out and rotated through different tables with the former and current officers spread among them. At each table it was set up to be a different portion of the State FFA interview process. So there was everything from a parliamentary procedure table to an agricultural issues room to a SAE table. All of this put on by the State officers for our benefit! It was amazing! I left after rotating through those tables feeling knowledgeable and ready for my upcoming interview and I now have all the tools and material needed to be prepared for the whole interview process. I had been working on it all previously but the extra influx of information they gave us has given my preparation process a lift! Overall the experience was amazing and I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to go and become more prepared for interviews!

Thank you, Corley Williams your 2019-2020 North District Reporter
I hope everyone has had a fantastic year so far. In the coming months is when Alabama FFA is at its busiest. One of the important events coming up is district and state interviews, where we see who deserves an officer position to serve our organization. Before the actual interviews start, North District hosts a set of two mock interviews for candidates to get tips and information to prepare them for the interviews. The first North District Mock Interview this year was on February 10th and we had a great turn out of 27 dedicated members from all over the North District that want to take their efforts to the next level. We opened it up with opening ceremonies as usual, but after this we split everyone into three groups and had them go to different rooms. In one room Alexis Stevens and I gave a practice test for the candidates to complete and take home for study material. After this, we went over where they could get study materials and different ways to study to give them an example of what to expect. In the other group we had Millie Grace Drake and Gavin Lee going over the interview process. The way they did this is by giving them tips about how to look more comfortable, how to answer questions, what information to know, how to calm your nerves, and anything you would need to know for an interview. Other topics they covered were how to properly do opening ceremonies. They had them individually stand up and say a part of the ceremony and critiqued them further so they would understand what to do in the future. In the final room we had Corley Williams and Leanna Burkhalter where they covered how to write the letter and the format for it. They supplied everyone with prompts to practice with while at school and showed them how to address certain things in the letter that would help them get the upper hand over the others. Most of all we would like to thank everyone that came out. Also, thank you to the wonderful advisors that pushed your members and made them want to be something more. I look forward to seeing you all in future endeavors.

Thank you, Gabe Hallmark 2019-2020 North District Sentinel