... is all it takes to make an impact.
Last year, Clemson University celebrated 100 years of Agricultural Education. As I sat through the inspirational program held on campus under the leadership of Dr. Phil Fravel, it was humbling to hear of all of the accomplishments of past leaders in Agricultural Education in South Carolina. If it were not for the work of these former leaders, professors and teachers, we would not have Agricultural Education in South Carolina as it is today.

As I reflected on the past, it also gave cause to take a look at just where Agricultural Education is in South Carolina today. Some of the accomplishments that should be noted, just in the past five years, include: a growth of nearly 40 teachers, the first National FFA Officer elected from South Carolina in over 40 years, our FFA State Convention has nearly outgrown the largest event arena at Clemson University outside of Littlejohn Coliseum and Death Valley, our Young Farmer and Agribusiness program has grown to over 1,300 members and stands as one of the largest state affiliates of the National Young Farmer and Agribusiness Association, and we have added seven new camping programs which has more than doubled our participation of students at FFA Camp. We have also seen our curriculum develop to fit the National Career Cluster model. We have developed a student assessment to measure our students’ comprehension of standards taught. And we have seen for the first time student industry certifications made available to our students to make them more employable.

But as we reflect on both our past and present, we must realize our responsibility to ensure the future of Agricultural Education. We must make sure that we continue to teach our students with the hope that some will accept the calling to become teachers and work to ensure that Agricultural Education remains strong for many years to come. We must be willing to step into leadership roles as they become available to ensure that our program continues in the right direction. And we must promote our program so that people are aware of what Agricultural Education and the FFA can do for the youth of our state.

The celebration of 100 years of Agricultural Education provided us an opportunity to reflect on the amazing accomplishments of those who have forged the Agricultural Education program into what it is today. It also provided for us a challenge to ensure that we will continue to uphold the standards established by our forefathers and ensure a bright future for Agricultural Education in South Carolina.
The 91st National FFA Convention, held Oct. 24-27, 2018, set a convention record of 69,944 members and guests in attendance. Those in attendance came from across the United States, representing all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. This year’s theme was “Just One,” with the event having an economic impact of $39.8 million for the city of Indianapolis.

The convention took place at several venues in downtown Indianapolis and the surrounding area. The Convention and Expo kicked off with the FFA band leading a grand march down Georgia Street in downtown Indianapolis on Oct. 24. The march ended at Bankers Life Fieldhouse and ushered in the start of the opening session. It was there that SC FFA members had the opportunity to hear from inspirational speaker and writer Kyle Scheele, Corporate Vice President of Microsoft Philanthropies Mary Snapp, creator of “Evolution of Dance” Judson Laipply, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue and U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos. At the Indianapolis Convention Center, FFA members explored the expo or expanded their minds by attending a variety of workshops or participating in educational and career success tours.

Throughout the week, FFA members experienced the first Blue Room, a 17,000-square-foot interactive area that showcased the cutting-edge technology, research and innovation taking place in agriculture. AgriNovus Indiana and Microsoft were the title sponsors of this experience. South Carolina FFA was well represented at the Blue Room, as Katie Martin, former SC FFA President, served as a host on behalf of the National FFA.

SC FFA members had the chance to participate in a variety of experiences while in Indianapolis, including an outstanding concert by Garth Brooks, a tour of the Indianapolis Speedway and the Indianapolis Zoo.

SC FFA members competed in 19 National Career Development Events and Leadership Development Events throughout the week. Dallas Nivens, from the Clover FFA Chapter, placed third high individual in the nation in the Forestry CDE. In addition, nine AgriScience fair projects placed at the National level with Kirstina Gleeton and Hannah Williamson, from the Lexington Technology Center FFA Chapter, placing 3rd overall in Plant Systems, Division 4. Other SC FFA highlights include two South Carolina FFA chapters, Buford and Crescent, receiving 3-Star National Chapter Awards.

Twenty-two South Carolina FFA members were awarded their American Degree at the eighth general session held at Lucas Oil Stadium Saturday morning. A record 4,255 FFA members received their American FFA Degree, the highest degree an FFA member can earn.

The SC FFA Association is honored to recognize those who have gone above and beyond in supporting the SC FFA. The following individuals were recognized for their service and awarded the Honorary American FFA Degree: Audie Green, Belton; Dr. James Clements, Clemson; Dr. Tammy Haile, Chesterfield; and Nancy Smith, Columbia. In addition, Keith Cox received the VIP Citation Award.

The convention concluded Saturday afternoon with President Donald Trump speaking to the FFA members. Trump spoke of the importance of agriculture and leadership and congratulated the National Star Award winners.

The National FFA Convention & Expo is scheduled to be held in Indianapolis through 2031.
**National Convention**

Dallas Nivens, Clover FFA Chapter, placed third high individual in the Forestry CDE.

Austin Cathcart, former SC FFA State President, represented South Carolina as the National Officer candidate.

Kirstina Gleaton and Hannah Williamson from the Lexington Technology Center FFA Chapter, placed third overall in the AgriScience Fair: Plant Systems, Division 4 competition.

President Donald Trump speaks to FFA members at the ninth general session.

Buford FFA members test their agriculture knowledge.

Fort Mill FFA members participate in one of the many hands-on exhibits at the expo.
Cox Receives VIP Citation Award

By Jillian Lash

Keith Cox was recognized for his dedication to the FFA Organization with the VIP Citation Award at the 91st National FFA Convention. The VIP Citation award goes to those who have dedicated 20 or more years of service to Agriculture Education and the FFA on a National level. After teaching at Latta High School for many years, Cox served as the South Carolina Executive FFA Director for 14 years, retiring this past summer. This prestigious recognition is given to only a select few individuals each year, which included not only Cox, but also former National FFA Advisor, Larry Case and United States Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue.
The annual College of Agriculture Forestry and Life Sciences Alumni Tailgate remains a tradition for many SC FFA members. This year, 40 different organizations and departments were represented at displays and interactive booths both in and outside Fike Recreation Center on Clemson’s campus.

A brief onstage program included Clemson President James Clements, Dr. Keith Belli, Dean of the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences, along with other key Clemson and SC Agriculture officials.

The SC Farm Bureau served as the naming sponsor. Other sponsors included: AgSouth Farm Credit, ACA, ArborOne Farm Credit, Corteva Agriscience, Massey Ferguson, McLeod Farms of McBee, SC, SC Soybean Board and Southern States Cooperative.

After the tailgate, SC FFA members attended the Clemson vs Syracuse football game to root on their Tigers.

The Aim-At-Ag Sporting Clays Tournament, sponsored by ArborOne Farm Credit, was held Nov. 2nd at the Back Woods Quail Club in Georgetown. Participants had the opportunity to test their shooting skills, win door prizes and conclude with a BBQ lunch and awards ceremony.

The tournament was another huge success with the proceeds being split between South Carolina 4-H and the South Carolina FFA Association. In the first seven years, Aim-at-Ag has raised $237,000 for state and local FFA and 4-H Chapters.

Thank you to ArborOne and the Georgetown FFA Chapter and their advisor, Cody Floyd, for volunteering their time to work the event.
Four outstanding FFA members were awarded a $500 South Carolina Association of Fairs (SCAF) Scholarship during the FFA ceremony at the State Fair in October. The purpose of this scholarship is to offer an incentive to students who are well rounded in their Supervised Agricultural Experience, FFA leadership, school and community activities and scholastic ability. The FFA members were presented their scholarship by Nancy Smith, president of the SCAF, before a crowd of FFA members, agricultural educators and sponsors.

Connor Durham is a member of the Belton Honea Path FFA Chapter. He is very active not only in his FFA Chapter as Student Advisor but also is a member of several school and community organizations. His SAE consists of working extensively with Gelbvieh beef cattle. Through his SAE he has gained skills in livestock selection, animal nutrition management and grooming practice. He plans to attend Tri-County Tech and transfer to Clemson and obtain a degree in Agricultural Mechanics and Business. Connor’s advisors are Deion Latimer and Ben Woody.

Matthew Brownlee is a member of the Laurens FFA Chapter. As chapter president, he helps coordinate and plan all chapter activities, while working a diverse SAE, consisting of cattle, horticulture, custom farm services and forestry. Responsibilities include checking health of animals and plants, marketing, providing quotes and performing other farm services. He has been involved in many different FFA activities at every level the FFA has to offer. Matthew would like to pursue an agriculture degree then, upon graduating, build a farm focusing on cattle genetics with the long term goal of opening a farm and garden supply center. His advisors are Melanie Birchmore and Kyle Penland.

Kristen Stacks is a member of the Buford FFA Chapter and serves as Chapter President. Kristen’s involvement is abundant in many FFA events on the local, state and national levels. Participating in State CDEs and placing top 10 in the nation in Employment Skills LDE while volunteering at Horse “N” Around Therapeutic Riding Center keeps Kristen busy outside of school. While unsure if she plans to become a veterinarian or an agriculture teacher, Kristen does plan to attend Piedmont Technical College then transfer to Clemson University. Her advisors are Troy Helms and Gayle Posipanko.

Cooper Brown is a member of the Wagner-Salley FFA Chapter. As chapter president, he has been involved with many FFA local and state events. His FFA involvement and SAE experiences including producing peanuts, cotton, corn and beef cattle at his family farm and running a broiler operation. Cooper also competed in multiple CDEs, participated in Mr. FFA and served on the State Officer Nominating Committee. Cooper plans to attend Piedmont Technical College after graduation and then transfer to Clemson University to pursue a degree in Agricultural Education. His advisors are Ethan Busbee and Alex Derrick.

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"Homegrown Fun"

FFA Day at the State Fair 2018

By Jillian Lash

On Oct. 16th, hundreds of FFA members and advisors gathered in the Nutt Livestock Arena for a ceremony and to be welcomed by Nancy Smith, general manager, to the 2018 State Fair.

After the ceremony, members had the chance to participate or watch the Tractor Operation and Safety Career Development Event. They visited livestock and horticulture exhibits and simply enjoy the food and fun the State Fair has to offer.

The State Fair has a long-standing tradition of successfully promoting the FFA. The State Fair hosted the organizational meeting of the Future Palmetto Farmers at the 1927 fair. This was the forerunner of the South Carolina Association of Future Farmers of America, known today as the South Carolina FFA Association.
Spartanburg Community College provides students with the knowledge and skills required for a successful career in the horticulture industry. Thanks to a widely respected campus arboretum with many gardens and greenhouse production facilities, SCC students gain hands-on experience with plant production, landscaping, nursery operations, greenhouse management and more. Students also attend conferences and field trips for diverse horticulture experiences and many complete internships with various companies such as Walt Disney World, The Greenery and the Biltmore House.

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SC Agricultural Educators attend National Convention

By Pat Earle

The South Carolina delegation of agricultural educators attended the 70th annual convention of the National Association of Agricultural Educators, Nov. 27-Dec. 1 in San Antonio, Texas.

Attendees spent time working with other agricultural educator associations from their region and across the United States. They collaborated to shape the direction of the national association for the upcoming year and learned about agricultural education initiatives that have had success in other states. They also participated in professional development focused on agriculture, sessions on building partnerships between agricultural educators, agribusiness leaders, and policy makers, and professional recognition awards.

Desiree Still, agricultural educator at Swansea High School and Freshman Academy, is one of a select group of agriculture teachers nationwide who received the 2018 Teachers Turn the Key professional development scholarship from the National Association of Agricultural Educators.

NAAE is the professional organization in the United States for agricultural educators. It provides the more than 8,000 members with professional networking and development opportunities, professional liability coverage, and extensive awards and recognition programs. The mission of NAAE is “professionals providing agricultural education for the global community through visionary leadership, advocacy and service.” The NAAE headquarters are in Lexington, KY.

Fravel receives Teacher Mentor Award

By Pat Earle

Philip M. Fravel, agricultural educator at Clemson University, is one of only six individuals nationwide who received the National Association of Agricultural Educators Teacher Mentor Award, given at the NAAE annual convention.

NAAE recognizes teachers who have mentored others in the profession of agricultural education through the Teacher Mentor award.

Dr. Fravel's multi-state mentoring activities take place in numerous settings and opportunities. He has served as an educator for 37 years, spending 15 of those years as a high school agricultural educator and the other 22 years as a teacher educator at Clemson University. He has formally provided lesson plans laboratory activities, agriculture mechanics plans and skill activities to his fellow agricultural educators. Fravel provides tangible teaching aids to countless teachers either through personal requests, local, multi-state and national in-service settings.

“Dr. Fravel provides countless opportunities for agricultural educators across the state of South Carolina. He identifies workshops from across the state and nation that could potentially provide teachers with relevant training and even assists teachers in obtaining the financial resources to attend. Each spring Dr. Fravel voluntarily spends a vast amount of time and energy hosting a two-day professional development workshop, fondly referred to as March-In-Service, for all student teachers and recent Clemson agricultural education graduates in their first few years of teaching. This workshop is intended to enhance pedagogical skills for classroom and agricultural learning lab instruction,” said Jesse Blunt Zeaser, a former graduate student of Fravel.

Fravel serves at the request of teachers on a number of school program advisory boards which generally meet twice annually. He has also been involved in state program evaluations where a more formal assessment is made of the agriculture programs in South Carolina. Fravel has always felt it is important to highlight the accomplishments of the programs. He demonstrates to college students and teachers how to establish a local advisory council to develop and maintain a program that meets the needs of their community.

Each of the six regional Teacher Mentor Award winners was recognized at the NAAE convention. CEV Multimedia sponsors the Teacher Mentor Award.
The South Carolina FFA Association held its annual **Chapter Opportunity Workshops** this fall. 500 chapter officers from 78 local chapters participated in the afterschool workshop.

The state officers focused on how officers can effectively work as a team. Activities included understanding personal “true color,” identifying personal strengths and characteristics and how they contribute to the team and to respect roles and accept responsibilities—all important factors that make an officer team successful.

Thank you to Hillcrest High School, Clinton High School and Edisto High School for hosting this year’s workshops.

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**1st Place State Team: Pendleton**
Blake Berry (advisor), Chase Greene, Hadley Smith, Michaela Hall, Mollie Jones

**1st Place State Team: Wagener-Salley FFA**
Dalton Fields, Cooper Brown, Tristan Nisbet, Mason Klimek, and Dylan Douglas. Advisors Ethan Busbee and Alex Derrick are not pictured.
The NYFEA Institute, held annually since 1966, was most recently hosted in Arkansas in the historic city of Rogers, Dec. 9-12. Young Farmer members from across the United States were in attendance and were able to experience the vast array of agriculture found in the Northwest region of Arkansas and Southwest Missouri. South Carolina had 20 members and five voting delegates present.

Attendees kicked off day one of the institute with an early breakfast followed by an exciting day of tour stops. We visited the Sam Walton Museum in Bentonville, Ark., the home of the original Wal-Mart. We then visited the Crystal Bridges American Art Museum, Tyson Foods and the University of Arkansas Agricultural Research facilities. The following day, the tour brought us to several Northwest Arkansas and Southwest Missouri family farms and the Daisy BB Gun Museum.

Saturday’s schedule included a live auction, which was followed by a brunch featuring the Ag. Decision Makers College, Ag. Communications Award Program, and the swearing in of the newly elected national officers.

Tim Faulkner, a Laurens County Young Farmer member, was named the President-Elect of the NYFEA. He will serve in this role for one year and submit his name for consideration as NYFEA President for the following year.
In 1917, the Smith Hughes Act was passed to give federal funding for vocational programs to include agriculture education. As a result, in 1928 a group of 33 farm boys from across the nation gathered in Kansas City, Mo., at the Baltimore Hotel and the Future Farmers of America was born. Today, the National FFA consists of 669,989 members in 8,630 chapters.

In South Carolina, both membership and the number of chapters continue to grow. In the fall of 2018, two schools celebrated the historical moment of chartering a new chapter and officially becoming a part of the great FFA Organization. Chapters chartering in 2018 include:

- Woodmont Middle FFA
- Pelion Middle FFA

The South Carolina FFA Association would like to welcome these chapters to the National FFA Organization.
The FFA camping programs offered at the SC FFA Leadership Center provides a week at the beach, a lifetime of memories and experiences of a lifetime.

The SC FFA offers a variety of camping programs throughout the year. Some of the activities range from a nice trail ride on the beaches during the Equine Camp to being instructed by Department of Natural Resource agents in the art of casting for shrimp at the fishing camp. Other specialty camps include the annual Greenhand Camp, where first-year members are introduced to a wide range of FFA activities, Forestry Camp conducted with SC Forestry Commission, Outdoor Recreation camp and a Horticulture/Turf Camp.

In addition, the SC FFA offers three summer camping sessions during June and a week of Leadership Camp in July. The summer camping programs include a variety of leadership activities and team-building events, including such activities as the challenging high ropes course to build confidence, kayaking to encourage team work and paint ball wars, which encourage strategic planning. The cumulative activity of the week is the Team Color Wars, which includes a variety of competitive events.

All FFA camping programs also include “night life” packages to take advantages of all that the Grand Strand has to offer. Activities range from trips to the aquarium to various other shows and night time venues. This year’s package included an exciting night of fast and furious action at Broadway Grand Prix, a thrilling ride on the Sea Thunder Dolphin Boat and a memorable night with artist impersonating legends such as Elvis, Elton John, Aretha Franklin and more.

To check out all SC FFA Camping programs and for chapter registration, go to: https://www.clemson.edu/extension/scaged/camp/programs.html

SC FFA Camps

A SUMMER EXPERIENCE THAT WILL LAST A LIFETIME

By Pat Earle
Brodie had always loved the outdoors, plants — and FFA. When he came to Clemson he found that all his interests could come together in one even bigger passion — feeding the world.

At Clemson, Brodie conducted research on plant pathology with professors who shared his goals. He then applied that research to the campus’ Tiger Gardens where he also taught nutrition and sustainability. Brodie is now in graduate school, with plans to travel to third-world countries to help them solve their food crises.

It’s a big task. But with knowledge, enthusiasm and the support of his mentors, Brodie is up to the challenge.

Learn more about Brodie’s story at clemson.edu/moments.
In September 2018, Hurricane Florence made landfall in South Carolina. During the hurricane, a lot of homes received damage. However, this was nothing compared to the damage that occurred after the hurricane was gone. For weeks after Hurricane Florence, the Waccamaw River that runs through Horry County kept rising. These rising waters resulted in historical flooding. As a result, many homes, businesses and belongings were lost.

The weeks after Hurricane Florence, Conway, Longs and Socastee were the towns in Horry County that were devastated the most. Many people are still trying to get back into their homes.

As the devastation in the Pee Dee and Coastal areas became apparent, FFA chapters from across the state stepped up to help out. The Loris FFA Chapter, under the leadership of advisors Nate Bellamy and Clair Hammonds, decided to open their shop to be a hub for donations to be used for the flooding and hurricane victims. In an effort to support this effort, several chapters from the Upstate and Midlands in unaffected areas of South Carolina did their part in collecting and donating supplies. Under the direction of advisors Carolina Davis and Brantley Caldwell, the Crescent FFA Chapter located in Iva in Anderson county served as the donation center for many in the Upstate region, where they collected relief supplies, sorted them, loaded into a trailer and delivered them to the drop-off point at the State Fairgrounds in Columbia, where they could be transported to the Loris Chapter in Horry County. In addition, other chapters joined in to deliver supplies to the State Fair drop-off point. As a result, two truckloads of supplies from Upstate and Midlands chapters were brought to the State Fair to be delivered to Loris High School for distribution to those in need. Hygiene products, flood buckets, water, food, animal feed and baby supplies are some of the many items that were collected from donations.

As donations came in to Loris High School, FFA members unloaded and separated items into groups to make them easier to dispense to people in need. Loris FFA Advisor Nate Bellamy said “We cannot express enough our sincere thanks and gratitude to all the FFA Chapters that had their members bring in supplies. It was amazing the effort that a lot of teachers took to make sure that these items made it to Horry County. We appreciate all the help from students and teachers from all across South Carolina.”
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