

Vision of Virginia

SPRING 2024



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Blue Jackets ON THE MOVE

2023-2024 Virginia FFA State Officers Team.

UPCOMING events

- SEPTEMBER**
- 27-OCT 6: State Fair of Virginia
- OCTOBER**
- 21-26: National FFA Convention
- DECEMBER**
- 2-7: NAAE Convention

by **Liberti Sell** – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Reporter

The State Officers were on the move as they traveled across the Commonwealth for their annual Goodwill Tour during National FFA Week. This year, the officer team visited over 70 middle and high schools, reaching thousands of FFA members within the seven days they were on the road. The theme for this year’s Goodwill Tour was Connect. The State Officers incorporated this theme into their tour by encouraging members to make meaningful connections within their lives in a workshop. Some takeaways were how to make meaningful connections within their communities and how

teamwork can positively influence others through those connections. The team also had the opportunity to travel to Ceres, Virginia to pay their respects to Henry C. Groseclose and to tour the FFA Museum. During this time, the officer team was joined by the current Central Region Vice President Kanyon Huntington. He led members through an inspiring workshop of his own, focused on building a sense of belonging and community within our chapters and beyond. Virginia FFA would like to thank every teacher, member, and sponsor who made the tour a memorable one.

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Chapter Chats



APPOMATTOX FFA HAS A *History Lesson*

Former New Farmers of America (NFA) member, Alfonso Morgan, and former Appomattox Future Farmers of America member and local Agricultural Educator, Dennis Torrence, speak to Appomattox County High School students.

by Nicole Ballagh – FFA Appomattox Chapter Vice President

Appomattox Senior FFA is one of the largest student-led organizations at Appomattox County High School (ACHS). The organization held its February meeting at the end of February. In an effort to recognize key events in community and FFA history, chapter leaders hosted two speakers. February also coincides with National FFA Week and Black History Month. Former Appomattox Future Farmers of America member and local Agricultural Educator, Dennis Torrence, and former New Farmers of America (NFA) member, Alfonso Morgan, spoke to students during the meeting.

According to the National FFA Organization, the NFA was an organization formed to serve African American young men in agricultural education classes. The organization was originally founded in Virginia in the early 1930's. The FFA and NFA served similar purposes prior to schools integrating. In 1965, the two organizations merged on the national level. It took several years before Appomattox integrated schools in 1971 before the merger happened locally.

Mr. Torrence explained that he grew up just a few miles away from Mr. Morgan, and they never knew each other because of segregation. Now the two are good friends. He used several firsthand accounts to illustrate the failed concept of “separate but equal.” Torrence elaborated on the impacts of segregation on society and how slow it takes to make cultural changes. Mr. Morgan attended both Carver Price and Appomattox County High School. He said, “I didn’t realize that both

schools were not the same. My eyes were opened when I came to the High school. You all’s shop was a lot bigger and better than what we had.”

Morgan also shared about some of his memorable moments from agriculture class. He enjoyed learning about forestry. He remembered walking through the forest in class and using a Biltmore stick to measure timber. Many of the students related to his story because it is a skill still used today. He also explained that during the merger, many NFA activities were not adopted by the FFA. There had been a choral competition among NFA members that was lost in the transition.

FFA members are known by their infamous blue corduroy jacket. The duo brought a Carver Chapter NFA jacket to display. Many noticed similarities between the two. Torrence pointed out the differences between the NFA and FFA emblem to students.

At the conclusion of the meeting, students reflected on the experience. Participants felt like Mr. Torrence and Mr. Morgan made history come alive with their firsthand accounts of an important time in our chapter’s past. Chapter president, Bruce Jones, said, “Their heartfelt message to us was inspiring and informative. I appreciated their willingness to share their very personal experiences from their time in agriculture class.”

2024 VIRGINIA TECH Block & Bridle



Hippology and Horse Judging Participants and Coaches.

HIPPOLOGY & HORSE JUDGING

by Jady Smith – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Treasurer

On February 9th and 10th, Virginia Tech hosted the annual Block and Bridle Hippology and Horse Judging competition, which welcomed competitors from FFA and 4-H to participate. On the 9th, Hippology participants showcased their knowledge of horse feed, tack, and breed identification. Members must show knowledge of internal and external horse structures as well. The following day, FFA and 4-H members engaged in Horse Judging where they evaluated a class of horses based on performance and conformation. We want to thank the Virginia Tech Block and Bridle Club and the Virginia Tech Youth Animal Science team for coordinating the event. The top FFA individuals in Junior and Senior categories for both Hippology and Horse Judging are to the right.

STOCKMANS JUDGING

by Nate Zerkel – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Vice President

On February 23rd and 24th, FFA and 4-H members had the opportunity to travel to Virginia Tech for the Block and Bridle Livestock and Stockman contests. Members put their hard work and practice to the test while competing in these contests. During the Stockman contest, students identify different breeds of animals, feeds, equipment, and meat cuts. Contestants also judge live animals, hay, and cuts of meat. The following individuals and teams placed well in the stockman's contest.

WINNER spotlight?

JUNIOR HIPPOLOGY

Alexis Davis
Wilson Middle

SENIOR HIPPOLOGY

Carrie Miller
Massanutten Technical

JUNIOR HORSE JUDGING

Mackenzie Campbell
Stuarts Draft Middle

JUNIOR ADVANCED HORSE JUDGING

Emily Krueger
Culpeper Middle

SENIOR HORSE JUDGING

Sarah Wiles
C.L. Payne

SENIOR ADVANCED HORSE JUDGING

Sara Tinsley
S.G. Stewart Middle

TOP 3 JUNIOR FFA INDIVIDUALS

3rd - Alexis Davis
Wilson Middle

5th - Liam Morris
S.G. Stewart

6th - Averie Keller
J. Frank Hillyard

TOP 3 JUNIOR FFA TEAMS

3rd - J. Frank Hillyard Team A
6th - S.G. Stewart Middle Team B
8th - Wilson Middle Team A

TOP 3 SENIOR FFA INDIVIDUALS

6th - Julia Haviland
Broadway

11th - Katie Payne
Broadway

12th - Kaydan Shomaker
Sherando

TOP 3 SENIOR FFA TEAMS

3rd - Broadway Team B
6th - Sherando Team A
7th - Broadway Team A

LIVESTOCK JUDGING

by Nate Zerkel – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Vice President

During the livestock judging contest, students judged the following species in classes of four: sheep, cattle, swine, and goats. The livestock were provided by Virginia Tech. Members had to place each class of four from best (first) to worst (fourth). Some classes had questions associated with them. Members had to give reasons to judges to defend their class placings.

TOP 3 JUNIOR FFA INDIVIDUALS

1st - Averie Keller

J. Frank Hillyard Team A

6th - Audrey Vencill

Northwood Middle

12th - Spencer Trumbo

J. Frank Hillyard Team B



The top 10 Junior Individuals for livestock judging.

TOP 3 JUNIOR FFA TEAMS

2nd - J. Frank Hillyard Team A

5th - J. Frank Hillyard Team B

9th - Northwood Middle Team A

TOP 3 SENIOR FFA INDIVIDUALS

1st - Nathan Paris

Chatham

2nd - Jodie Saunders

Nelson County

3rd - Aaron Manetta

Broadway

TOP 3 SENIOR FFA TEAMS

1st - Broadway Team A

2nd - Nelson Senior Team B

4th - Broadway Team B



Broadway FFA Team A, the top team in senior livestock judging.

We would like to thank the Virginia Tech Block and Bridle Club and the Virginia Tech Youth Animal Science team for organizing the event.



MEATS EVALUATION

by Jady Smith – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Treasurer

On March 2nd, FFA members from across Virginia gathered at Virginia Tech for the Block and Bridle Meats Evaluation contest. For this event, students are tested on their ability to identify meat cuts and judge the quality of meats and carcasses. Additionally, they are required to take a written exam, calculate yield grades, and work through a team problem. We would like to thank the Virginia Tech Block and Bridle Club, the Virginia Tech Meat Science Center, and the Virginia Tech Youth Animal Science team for organizing the event. The following are the top three in the Junior and Senior contests.



High Junior Team.

JUNIOR MEATS INDIVIDUAL

1st - Luke Myers

Elkton Middle

2nd - Bryar Swecker

Elkton Middle

3rd - Alexis Davis

Wilson Middle

JUNIOR MEATS TEAMS

1st - Elkton Middle

Luke Myers, Bryar Swecker, Sutton Swecker, and Riley Davis

2nd - Wilson Middle

Alexis Davis, Rieley Woolridge, Sawyer Irvine, and Drenmon Gearheart

3rd - Broadway

Avery Caffrey, Ella Beagle, Abigail Coleman, and Myleigh Jones



High Junior Individuals.

SENIOR MEATS INDIVIDUAL

1st - Grayson Long

Massanutten Technical

2nd - Malaina Ritchie

Massanutten Technical

3rd - Rebecca Stout

Sherando

SENIOR MEATS TEAMS

1st - Massanutten Technical

Grayson Long, Malaina Ritchie, Sarah Craun, and Carrie Miller (Pictured)

2nd - Sherando

Rebecca Stout, Keller Cooley, Mason Patterson, and Emma Wisecarver

3rd - Central

Tavion Dodson, Taylor Leland, Brittany Sine, and Brooke Sine



High Senior Individuals.



High Senior Team.

LET'S GO, *Parli Pro!*



by Kirin Miller
VA FFA 2023-2024 State Vice President

Do the phrases “I move to...” and “I second that,” a podium and a gavel sound familiar? These phrases are related to Robert’s Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedure.

The Parliamentary Procedure contest promotes the conduct of efficient and effective business meetings. Throughout the competition, competitors must properly conduct a business meeting while strengthening their public speaking, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills while demonstrating their knowledge of Parliamentary Law under the guidance of Robert’s Rules of Order. The stakes are high as competitors go through each of the five phases of the competition, including a written exam, an 11-minute team presentation of parliamentary procedure, oral questions, team team-solving practicum, and individual practicum based on minutes and records. FFA members and their advisors spend many early mornings and late evenings preparing for the competition.



The state winning Parliamentary Procedure team from Buffalo Gap pose for a photo after the contest.

The 2024 State Parliamentary Procedure Contest was held on March 15th at Holston High School in Damascus, Virginia. For the senior division, the winning team was Buffalo Gap. For the junior division, the winning team was Broadway. These teams will advance to the national contest and compete at the 97th National FFA Convention held in Indianapolis, Indiana, from October

23rd through the 26th. In the senior division, the second-place team was Sherando, who will compete at the Big E in West Springfield, Massachusetts, this September. The highest-scoring individuals in the junior division will perform opening ceremonies at the third session of the 98th Virginia FFA State Convention this summer. We want to thank those who judged the contest and Holston High School for hosting!

“Prior to participating in Parliamentary Procedure I was unable to speak in front of a crowd and had terrible stage fright. Parli helped me come out of my shell to the point where I can now lead meetings and give presentations without being nervous or doubting myself.”

- Kaydan Shomaker, Sherando FFA.

The highest scoring junior individuals, who will perform opening ceremonies at the third session of State Convention, were:

All State President: **Avery Caffrey** from **Broadway**

All State Vice President: **Madelyn Caviness** from **Carroll Middle**.

All State Secretary: **Haylee Hoffman** from **Fort Defiance**.

All State Treasurer: **Kari Alderman** from **Carroll Middle**.

All State Reporter: **Hope Bruce** from **Broadway**

All State Sentinel: **Layla Brown** from **Wilson Memorial**

All State Junior Advisor: **Reese Ostlund** from **Wilbur S. Pence**

Congratulations!



Each year the highest performing officers from the Conduct of Meetings event are selected to the Virginia FFA All-Star Team. They are then given the opportunity to present the opening ceremonies at a session at state convention.

THINK YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A CERTIFIED PARLIAMENTARIAN?

Let's test your knowledge with some trivia!

(You can find the answers at the bottom of this page.)

1. How many taps of the gavel calls the meeting to order?
2. What is the minimum amount of votes needed to move forward with the "previous question?"
3. Does an appeal require a second?

VICE THE COOPERATIVE WAY



Friends, new and old gather for a picture after the gift exchange night.

by Grace Wälbroehl – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Secretary

A weekend jam-packed full of competition, dancing, building community, and learning about cooperatives; if you think this sounds like the perfect weekend, you would be right! That description accurately reflects how we spent our time at the 2024 VICE Conference. From March 22nd to 24th, over 45 FFA members, 4-H members, and other high school students serviced by cooperatives came to Graves Mountain Lodge for the annual VICE conference. The Graves family have been the gracious hosts of VICE for many years. VICE is hosted by the Virginia Cooperative Council and educates students on the cooperative style of business.

To start the weekend, students, advisors, and volunteers arrived on the windy morning at Graves Mountain Lodge. After settling into their rooms, they jumped into learning about the well-known and highly-loved “True Colors” personality assessment. In this assessment, they learn their color and how they interact with others as individuals, leaders, and teammates. Their colors will guide the students as they continue throughout the weekend in their simulation teams. After lunch on Friday, students dive into learning about the cooperative way. They hear from several rural Virginia cooperatives about how their businesses work, how they care for their communities, and even learn about future internship and job opportunities! Friday evening ended with a special message from Delegate Bobby Orrock and a night of fun with a VICE fan-favorite: Bean Poker!

Saturday and Sunday saw students hard at work participating in the cooperative simulation “Who’s Minding The Store”. In this simulation, students take on a role in the failing company their team just took over and have one goal: raise your cooperative’s net worth by more than the other teams in your market area. They do this by buying and selling products, deciding on advertising budgets, learning the ins and outs of labor usage, and completing other tasks needed to run a successful cooperative. The participants went through 5 fast-paced quarters where they saw their progress at the end of each one and raced to catch up with or stay above the other teams. To end Saturday evening, everyone came together for ice cream, karaoke, and line dancing. What more could you ask for?



Students enjoy a fun night of bean poker.



Scholarship winner Emory Seal.



Scholarship winner Zoey Berezansky.



Scholarship Winner Audrey Garrison.

One of the most enticing things VICE has to offer is the opportunity to win scholarships based on the knowledge you gained and your participation in the simulations. This year's scholarship winners are as follows: Zoey Berezansky from the Gloucester FFA Chapter (\$2000), Emory Seal from the Buffalo Gap FFA Chapter (\$1500), and Audrey Garrison from the Turner Ashby FFA Chapter (\$1000). We would like to wish a huge congratulations to all of these outstanding members!

In addition to the incredible learning and growth opportunities offered at VICE, participants also had the

unique opportunity to connect with those around them. Although they spent plenty of time with their teammates, trying, failing, succeeding, and learning together, participants also got to know participants outside their teams through icebreakers, conversation during meals, and Saturday's free time. Some students bonded over their love of fishing and took on fishing in the Rose River, while others braved the hike up the mountains surrounding Graves Mountain Lodge. These connections will last a lifetime! Will we see YOU next year at VICE?



2024 VICE Participants and group leaders.

STATE Skill-A-Thon

by Adam Hawkins

VA FFA 2023-2024 State Sentinel

On March 27th, members came from across the state to compete in the state skill-a-thon contest at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds. During the skill-a-thon contest, competitors identify feed, breeds, equipment, and Meat Cuts. They must also judge a class of meat cuts, judge a class of hay, do team activities, and take a written exam. During the team activities, teams complete a quiz on BQA-associated knowledge and work on a scenario related to the contest.

**Virginia FFA thanks the Virginia
Tech Youth Animal Science team
for organizing the event!**

TOP 3 JUNIOR INDIVIDUALS

4th - Alexis Davis
Wilson Middle

7th - Averie Keller
J. Frank Hillyard

19th - Rylie Floyd
J. Frank Hillyard

TOP 3 JUNIOR TEAMS

4th - J. Frank Hillyard Team A

8th - Wilson Middle Team A

15th - J. Frank Hillyard Team B

TOP 3 SENIOR INDIVIDUALS

7th - Herschel Hoffeditz
Broadway

11th - Taylor Arbogast
Broadway

14th - Katie Payne
Broadway

TOP 3 SENIOR TEAMS

3rd - Broadway Senior Team A

7th - Buffalo Gap Senior Team A

10th - Broadway Senior Team B



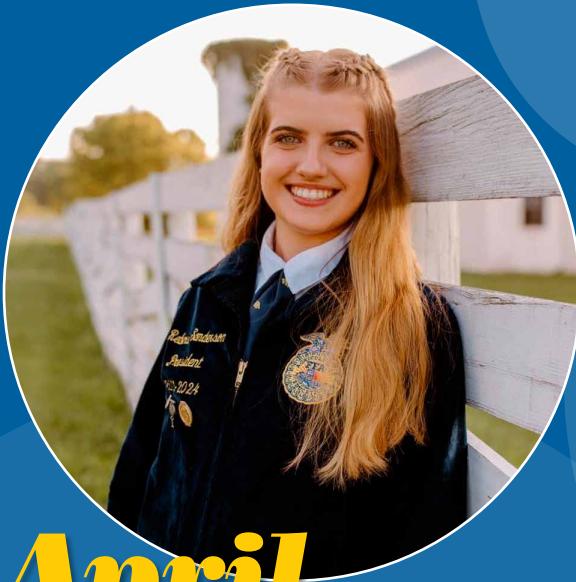
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AGRICULTURE IN ACTION

Member Spotlights

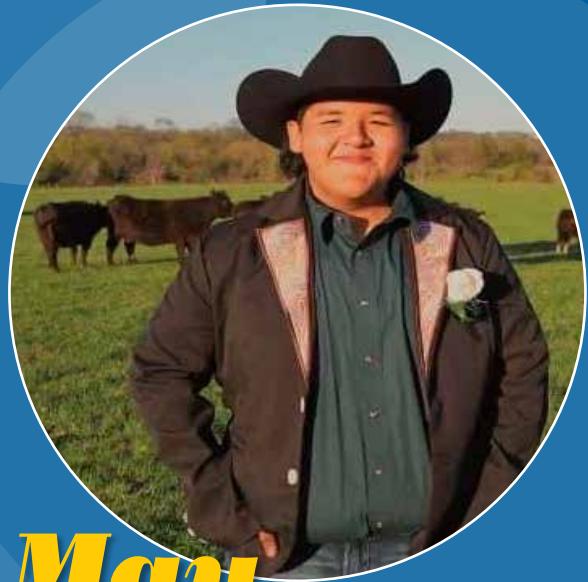
by Madeline Moore – VA FFA Association



April

REBEKAH SANDERSON

Rebekah is a senior at Randolph Henry High School where she followed in her family's footsteps by joining FFA in middle school and has now served as the chapter's FFA President for the past two years. Rebekah fell in love with FFA through the Creed Speaking competition where she won state and competed at the national level where she ended with a bronze rating. In 2023, Rebekah won the state Prepared Public Speaking competition and advanced to the national level where she ended with a silver rating with her speech, "We Are the Start of the End," dedicated to agriculturist's mental health. Rebekah has several SAE's but her most prominent one is working on her family's poultry operation with her parents and over 40,000 chickens! She is responsible for collecting, sorting, and placing eggs in trays and sanitizing the poultry houses. Rebekah is also an intern for the Charlotte County Cooperative Extension office where she volunteers alongside extension agents on farm visits and planning community outreach events. She also has a love for baking and makes baked goods for weddings, events, and most recently, the county's livestock sale! Rebekah plans to continue her education at North Carolina State University where she is majoring in Crop and Soil Sciences with a concentration in Agronomy. She is eager to share her experiences in production agriculture and poultry industry but is excited to broaden her knowledge and gain experiences in other areas of the agriculture industry.



May

ROY OCAMPO

Roy is currently a Junior at Liberty High School in Bealeton, Virginia. Roy currently serves as the Sentinel for the C.L. Payne FFA Chapter and takes pride in working on his family's farm, Rancho El Milagro in Catlett, Virginia. Roy joined FFA his freshman year of high school and has competed in multiple competitions including, Food Science, Agricultural Sales, and his favorite, Livestock Judging. Roy, along with his parents and siblings, raise livestock and produce at Rancho El Milagro. Rancho El Milagro, which means "the miracle ranch," is the standing testament to generations of hard work, dedication, and quality from the Ocampo family. Roy is a proud 5th generation farmer and plans to continue the family legacy of raising cattle. At age 6, Roy started his farming career after being introduced to goats and acquiring a small herd. As Roy got older, his desire to grow his knowledge and experience in raising livestock did as well. Eventually, Roy purchased his first cow, which he still has today! Roy has learned many skills, specifically in networking and communication, from FFA that have helped him on his family's farm. Roy has found a supporting community in agriculture and FFA as well. Roy shared, "Agriculture has been a challenge, but a challenge I am glad I overtook. You would never think you would like it... until you try it. You might think it's too hard and complicated but as long as you reach out and talk to others, you learn, you have fun, and you meet amazing people."

VA FFA Area Rallies



Nearly 400 students assembled for the Appalachian Area Rally in Wytheville. In the photo, attendees listen on as area officers perform opening ceremonies.

by **Jadyn Smith** – *VA FFA 2023-2024 State Treasurer*

Every spring, the six Virginia FFA areas each host an area rally. These rallies bring together members from across the area and provide them with opportunities such as workshops, meeting with collegiate ambassadors, and competing in area-level competitions. The first rally of 2024 was the Southeast Area, held at Appomattox County High School on March 8th. Contests included Ag Mechanics, Public Speaking, Hippology, and Middle School contests. The Central Area hosted its area rally on March 13th at Reynolds Community College. Contests included public speaking, small engines, and tractor troubleshooting. The Blue Ridge Area Rally took place at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds on March 19th. Members competed in public speaking, small engines, and tractor operators contests. The South Ridge Area hosted its Area Rally on March 20th at the Old Dominion Ag Complex in Chatham. A few of the contests held included middle school contests, public speaking, and discussion meet, among others. The Northern Area Rally took place at Laurel Ridge Community College on March 22nd. A few of the contests

that members competed in were public speaking, vet Science, and food science. The final rally of 2024 was the Appalachian Area Rally, held on April 12th at Wytheville Community College. Thirteen contests were held, including employment skills, floriculture, and public speaking, to name a few. Through these six rallies, thousands of Virginia FFA members were able to grow as leaders and build career-based skills for their futures. Here is what 2023-2024 Virginia FFA State



Secretary Grace Walbroehl had to say about this year's Area Rallies: "I loved area rallies because of the opportunity it provided for members from different chapters to meet each other, participate in workshops, and compete! It's so special to see so many different members from around the state try something new for the first time or talk to someone new who might end up being one of their closest friends. There's nothing like seeing someone's face light up when they win their first area competition and that was honestly a large part of why I loved rallies so much!" We want to thank everyone who worked to make each Area Rally happen!



A winning team from Bassett poses for a photo at the South Ridge Area Rally.



Virginia Tech and other colleges, universities, and industry representatives come to area rallies each year to speak with the FFA members about prospective enrollment or employment opportunities.

by Anne Kathryn Martz
 VA FFA 2023-2024 State Vice President

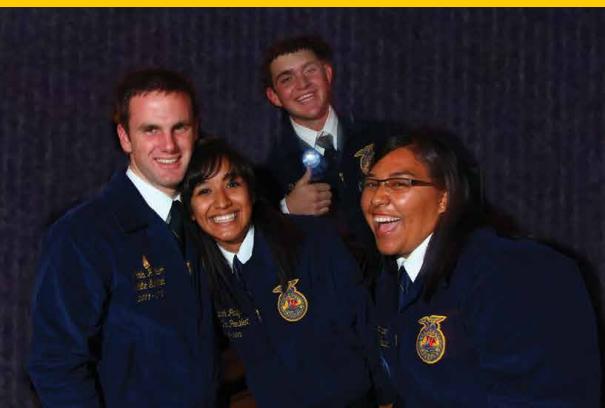
Mr. Coleman started his career as an Agricultural FFA Advisor after receiving his master's degree in education from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Spending the majority of his time in the classroom at Smith High School he cultivated deep connections with his students while emphasizing the importance of what it means to be a member of the FFA. He stepped away from his advisor role briefly to pursue administration at Smith High School, however it was not long before he found himself once again involved in the organization which he loved. He spent the rest of his 39 year career as a Agricultural Education Supervisor through the VDOE.

Throughout this time, he was able to experience the merging of the New Farmers of Virginia with Virginia Future Farmers in 1965, women being allowed to join FFA in 1969, and the name change to National FFA Organization in 1989. With his involvement in key events within our organization's history, he continued pushing for positive change. While spending many days away from home to fulfill his duties he never ceased to dedicate his all to the FFA and remain a loving husband to his wife Doris Coleman and his son Wickham Coleman Jr. Even prior to his passing Mr. Coleman's legacy lives on, as his story inspires us to truly embody the meaning of the FFA Mission Statement through his premier leadership, extensive personal growth, and his many years of career success.



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

~ FFA Mission Statement



  
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