



Where Are They NOW?

LIFE AFTER FFA

FFA ALUMNI

This month's article features those who are involved with either the New Jersey FFA Alumni Association or an alumni affiliate.

"Where Are They Now?" highlights former New Jersey FFA members who once wore the blue jacket and are now in successful careers. Through the interpersonal skills and support it provides, the FFA leads its members toward successful careers.

James...

- Joined the Cape May Tech FFA Chapter in 2007
- Served as a State FFA Officer from 2010-2012
- Graduated from Neumann University
- Is the Librarian and Social Studies Teacher at Nativity Preparatory School
- Served as State FFA Alumni President in 2014-2015
- Earned the Honorary State Degree in 2016

How did Ag Education and FFA help prepare you for your career?

"FFA has helped me develop and practice skills like organization, leadership and public speaking which are vital to be a successful teacher. I also learned the importance of modeling expectations, which I use every day as an educator."

How would you define a "successful" life?

"A successful life is one in which you are happy with yourself and you spread that happiness to improve the lives of others."

What is your favorite FFA memory?

"One event that I have enjoyed attending is the State FFA Convention. I have attended 9 State FFA Conventions (2008-2016) in a variety of capacities including three as a high school student, two as a state officer, one as a Nominating Committee assistant, and three as the CDE Coordinator. State Convention is such an exciting event which brings together students, teachers, and old friends alike."

JAMES FERGUSON



"FFA is what you make it. There are plenty of CDEs, conferences, and workshops to take part in. Once your time as an FFA member concludes, join the FFA Alumni and give back!"

CHRIS NNADI

How did Ag Education and FFA help prepare you for your career?

"Whether I am negotiating contracts with vendors or managing relationships with the business units I support, I frequently rely on the communication, leadership, and networking skills developed during my time in FFA. Additionally, the time management helps me accomplish a lot in less time."

"Embrace your time in FFA and fully immerse yourself in the organization. Participate in as many CDEs and FFA events as possible. Take leadership roles in your chapters. Embrace the principles and values of the FFA."

What is your favorite FFA memory?

"As a chapter officer, my favorite memory would be our trips to Camp Bernie for COLT. During my time as a state officer, visiting chapters was a great experience for me."

How would you define a "successful" life?

"I would define a successful and good life as one that allows a person to grow both personally and professionally each day, to positively impact their community, and to serve as role models for those in need of inspiration."

Chris...

- Joined the Penns Grove FFA Chapter in 1996
- Served as a State FFA Officer from 2000-2002
- Graduated from Rutgers University
- Manages supply contracts for laboratory operations.
- Served as State FFA Alumni President from 2009-2013
- Earned his Honorary State Degree in 2010
- Earned his American Degree in 2003



MIKE BROOKS

How did Ag Education and FFA help prepare you for your career?

“Ag Education helped me with where I am now through activities that taught me teamwork and leadership skills, having opportunities to public speak, and developing a good work ethic. The experiences from state office and chapter office have benefited me to this day, and the skills I learned during my time as a FFA member are still being used today.”

“Hard work and dedication pays off, most of the time not immediately, but eventually it will. Be open to new experiences. The connections you make in the FFA will come back and benefit you when you’re older.”

How would you define a “successful” life?

“It is very important to have a happy and caring family or support system around you. Building a good reputation by being honest and trustworthy, especially in your community or friend group, is also important.”

Mike...

- Joined the Woodstown FFA Chapter in 1996
- Served as a State FFA Officer from 2000-2002
- Owns and manages Dusty Lane Farm, LLC in Elmer, New Jersey
- Partners with Sorbella Farms CSA in Elmer, New Jersey
- Was an American FFA Star Farmer Finalist in 2003
- Serves on the Farm Credit East Board of Directors
- Earned his Honorary State Degree in 2014

What is your favorite FFA memory?

“When travelling to the Eastern States Expo for my Eastern States Star Farmer interview, I forgot my FFA jacket at college. I therefore had to borrow someone else’s jacket, and one of the interviewers mentioned it in my interview! Although slightly embarrassing, it broke the ice for the interview and I earned Eastern States Star Farmer. Fun fact: I currently serve on the Farm Cred East Board of Directors with one of the interviewers from that interview.”

Jenny...

- Joined the Warren Hills FFA Chapter in 2008
- Attended Delaware Valley University
- Earned her American FFA Degree in 2011
- Was the 2015 New Jersey State FFA Dairy Princess
- Serves as the Warren Hills FFA Alumni Secretary
- Teaches Agricultural Education at Newton High School

How would you define a “successful” life?

“A successful life is doing what you love. If you do that then you will never have to work a day in your life.”

What is your favorite FFA memory?

“My favorite FFA memory is going to National Convention in 2008, where I received a gold medal in the Floriculture CDE.”

“Get involved right away! If you wait you will wish you didn’t. It is a great way to meet a lot of people from all over the US. FFA teaches you many life skills.”

How did Ag Education and FFA help prepare you for your career?

“Ag Education helped me by being involved and participating in various Career Development Events. Thank you to Mr. Christian, Mr. Leh and Mr. Pede for being awesome teachers in preparing the leaders of today for the future of tomorrow and for being my mentors!”

Jenny Allen



Everyone has a story to tell. We want to hear yours!

How has the FFA made a difference in your life?
Share Your Story with us at

<https://form.jotform.com/NJFFA/WhereAreTheyNow>
and be featured in a special issue!