



Where Are They NOW?

LIFE AFTER FFA

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

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS

This month’s article features those who have made the change from Ag students to Ag Teachers, preparing a new generation for the industry.



KEELY DiTIZIO

Keely previously served as State FFA Secretary from 2008-2009, and came back as State Vice President in 2010-2011. Since then, Keely graduated from Stockton University and now serves Salem County Vo. Tech. High School as an Agricultural Educator and Chapter FFA Advisor.

What sparked your interest in Ag Ed and led you to participate in FFA?

“I met the agriculture teacher at school. She was so funny. I knew I wanted to be in her class.”

What is your favorite FFA memory?

“Meeting my husband at the National FFA Convention.”

“FFA members: Be as involved as possible! Your time in FFA goes fast, so make the most of it!”

How has Ag Ed and the FFA prepared you for your career in Agricultural Education?

“FFA prepared me for every aspect of my current job. My communication skills allowed me to write a resume and nail my job interview. The content learned in my Ag classes obviously prepared me to teach the next generation of Ag students. FFA helped me make connections that helped me land my job.”



Jennifeur Wilson served as a State FFA Officer from 2002-2004, first as State Secretary and then as State FFA President. Since stepping out of the blue and gold, Jennifeur graduated from Rutgers University and currently teaches Ag Ed at North Warren High School.

Her best friend encouraged her to enroll in agricultural education in high school and participate in the FFA. When asked about how Jennifeur reached her current career, she says that she “wouldn’t have even known about [the opportunity to teach agricultural education] without FFA.”



JENNIFEUR WILSON



LAURA PINHAS

After her time in FFA, Laura attended Delaware Valley College to pursue her career in Agricultural Education. Later, she attained her Masters Degree from Rutgers University and currently teaches Ag Ed at Sussex Co. Vo. Tech. High School.

How did Ag Education, including FFA, prepare you for your career?

“Ag Ed and the FFA is what inspired me to become an agricultural educator. The FFA helped me with my organizational skills and time management, as well as public speaking.”

What was the spark that led you to participate in Ag Ed and FFA?

“Both of my older brothers were involved in FFA. Steven was a chapter officer. Seeing all of the opportunities that they had due to the FFA, I knew that I wanted to be even more involved and get to experience more than they did.”

“When you get involved with Agricultural Education and the FFA, you have to commit to the time and hard work that it requires. However, if you put in the work, you will get even more out of the experience. I would not trade the sacrifices that I made to be a part of the FFA for the experiences and skills that I earned by being a part of it. If I could go back in time, I would do everything exactly the same.”

What advice would you give to FFA members?

“Try as many competitions and get as involved as you can. The more you do, you will have a better chance of discovering what you really love and a career that you can be proud to have.”

From FFA Members to Agricultural Educators:

- Denise Emmons – Allentown
- Brittany Lawyer – Buena
- Nicole Smith – Cumberland
- Taryn Romanczak – Hunterdon Co. Poly Tech
- Jennifeur Wilson – North Warren
- Dawn Viveiros – Pemberton
- Jessica Heritage – Phillipsburg
- Amy Kline – Warren Hills
- Nancy Trivette – NJDA Office of Ag Education

- Dale Cruzan, III – Allentown
- Hanna Toft – Cape May Tech
- Dan Delcher – Essex Co.
- David Pede – Newton
- Brian Hayes – No. Burlington
- Joel Rudderow – Penns Grove
- Keely DiTizio – Salem Co. Vo. Tech
- Deanna Miller – Woodstown

- Bryan Leh – Belvidere
- Patricia Thorne - Cumberland
- Amanda Hayes – Hackettstown
- Jenny Allen – Newton
- Robin McLean – No. Burlington Middle
- Greg Babbitt – Phillipsburg
- Laura Pinhas – Sussex Co.
- Erin Noble – NJDA Office of Ag Education