

# Where Are They NOW?

LIFE AFTER FFA

## AGRIBUSINESS & RELATED CAREERS

This month's article features those who have utilized FFA skills in the agricultural industry.

*"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.

### DAWN EDMONDS

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

"My experiences with the FFA opened the doors for me to network with agricultural leaders and helped me to realize that I wanted a career working in the agricultural sector."

"A successful life to me would be one full of good health, a loving family, great friends, and getting up to do something that you enjoy every day."

#### Dawn...

- Joined the Oakcrest FFA Chapter in 1995
- Served as a State FFA Officer from 1999-2000
- Attended Delaware Valley University for her Bachelors and Masters Degrees
- Serves as a Loan Officer for Farm Credit East, working with farms in Cumberland County to obtain financing.
- Enjoys horseback riding in her down time



#### What advice would you give to FFA members?

"Take the time to network with farmers, event coordinators and judges at events. Many of the people that are brought in to judge are in the industry and could offer insight to something that you would like to do in the future."

#### What was your favorite moment in FFA?

"As a State FFA Officer being involved in running the State FFA Convention and traveling to Germany for the International Leadership Seminar for State Officers."

#### Catherine...

- Joined the Cumberland Regional FFA Chapter in 1998
- Served as a State FFA Officer from 2002-2004
- Attended the State University of New York – College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill
- Currently serves as the Supervisory Wildlife Refuge Specialist at Deep Fork National Wildlife Refuge in Okmulgee, OK – United States Department of the Interior/US Fish and Wildlife Service

### CATHERINE BELL

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

"FFA taught me to step out of my comfort zone and not be afraid to try new things. It taught me leadership skills, communication skills, time management, and most of all – confidence. I'm grateful for all of the experiences I had and everything I learned during my time as a member of the FFA."

"FFA members: take advantage of every opportunity the FFA offers and make connections with people. I'm still friends with a lot of the people I met. In my career, I have also met a lot of FFA members. My co-worker was one in Oklahoma."

#### What is your favorite FFA memory?

"The day I became an FFA member. I was in Intro to Agriculture and the teacher had us stand up and introduce ourselves. After that, she told me I was going to do the Creed Contest. I had no idea what she was talking about. She encouraged me to come to the first chapter meeting of the school year and from then on, I was hooked."

#### How would you define a "good" or "successful" life?

"A good or successful life is one that you can look back on and have no or very few regrets."



## CLINTON SHONTZ

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

"FFA taught me many skills, too many to list."

"A good or successful life to me is three words: family, work and play."

### What was your favorite memory in FFA?

"When my teammate, Joel, and I performed the Crunchy Frog."

### What advice would you give to FFA members?

"FFA members, don't let a moment pass you by. Do everything you can!"

#### Clint...

- Joined the Northern Burlington FFA Chapter in 1985
- Served as a State FFA Officer from 1989-1990
- Attended Virginia Tech and Rutgers University for undergrad
- Currently serves as a USDA/NJDA Inspector

#### Betsy...

- Joined the Northern Burlington FFA Chapter in 1986
- Served as a State FFA Officer from 1990-1991
- Attended Delaware Valley University for her undergrad
- Currently works in the Financial Department at Creative Images, and serves as Barn Staff at Granite Springs Stables
- Enjoys cooking, reading, and gardening in her down time

## BETSY VOGT

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

"FFA helped me to learn record keeping, organizational skills, and how to work and interact with people. I also learned voice projection which comes in handy when teaching riding lessons, especially on windy days."

FFA members: Get involved! I branched out of my comfort zone and learned so much. You can too!"

### What is your definition of a "good" or "successful" life?

"Success isn't about how much stuff you have. Be a good influence on others. Be a good role model and make a difference in someone's life."

### What was your favorite FFA memory?

"National Conventions."



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