

# Where Are They NOW?

LIFE AFTER FFA

## GEARING UP FOR THE AG INDUSTRY

This month's article features young professionals who are using the skills gained through the FFA to enter a career 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.



Jeff...

### JEFF NEYHART

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

"First, participation in the Agriscience Fair helped reinforce the principles of the scientific method and hypothesis-driven research. Second, training in public speaking prepared me for effective communication of my work."

"To me, a successful life includes finding ways to make something you love into work. It is 100% true that if you do what you love, you never work a day in your life. It may take years to accomplish this, but you will be much more satisfied."

- Joined the Biotechnology FFA Chapter in 2007
- Served as Treasurer and Vice President of the Cornell Collegiate FFA Chapter
- Attended Cornell University, and now is a Doctoral student at the University of Minnesota, studying breeding and genetics of barley

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

"Consider all the possibilities open to you as an FFA member. It is rare to find other organizations with such breadth of potential experiences. Carry that spirit throughout life – you never know what doors will open up."

#### What is your favorite FFA memory?

"Rehearsing and delivering the FFA Creed for the NJ Creed contest as a high school freshman. I did not win, but the effort made me a better public speaker and helped me connect with the philosophy of the FFA."



### CATHERINE CINCOTTA

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

"Ag Ed and FFA gave me the leadership and career skills I needed to pursue a career in the science field, specifically, CASE Plant Science. With this background knowledge, I was able to readily dive into a career pathway that focused around plant science."

"FFA members, make goals and stick to them! As an FFA member, there are so many opportunities to help you accomplish these goals. Whether it is a career goal or personal goal, some leadership or service opportunity will help you achieve it! FFA is more than just a student organization; FFA prepares members for a successful future! All you have to do is strive for it!"

#### What is your favorite memory in the FFA?

"My favorite memory was National FFA Convention as a state officer. It was really great to be there with my state officer team. We all encouraged each other and were able to enjoy the convention as teammates and friends. I also enjoyed seeing our members involved in the convention and congratulating them on a job well done!"

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

"A successful life is one you can look back on and see how all you have done brought you to where you are. No matter your passion, if you are making choices to strive toward it, you can see your own success."



Catherine...

- Joined the Northern Burlington FFA Chapter in 2009
- Served as a State FFA Officer from 2013-2014
- Graduated from Rutgers University as Plant Science major
- Currently serves as a Program Technician at the U.S. Department of Agriculture



## STEPHANIE TARLOWE

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

“Perfect timing to ask this – last week, we had an on-farm lab about mastitis in which we performed the California Mastitis Test. Whereas most of my classmates had never seen the paddles before, I learned how to use them my freshman year in preparation for the Dairy Foods CDE! The Dairy and Horse Judging CDEs also got me used to knowing what ‘normal’ looks like for these animals, making it easier to spot sick or injured animals during physical examinations. It was also helpful to start learning terminology as early as my high school animal science class so the vocabulary wasn’t as overwhelming when I got to undergrad courses. I can also confidently say I never would have taken an interest in farm animals if it hadn’t been for the exposure I got through involvement in my ag classes and FFA. FFA is still highly regarded by many even after all this time after high school.”

#### Stephanie...

- Joined the Warren Hills FFA Chapter in 2008
- Served as a State FFA Officer from 2011-2012
- Attended Cornell University as an undergrad, and is obtaining a DVM from Cornell
- Serves part-time teaching dairy at Cornell while finishing veterinary school

“To me, a successful life is having a solid support system of friends and family, and a steady job that you enjoy doing that gives you the financial security to be able to ‘treat yo self’ every once in a while.”



### What is your favorite FFA memory?

“I got attended the 2010 National FFA Convention as a member of the National FFA Band. This was a really unique experience that allowed me to combine my two biggest passions of music and FFA. I quickly became friends with the people from across the country who shared these passions, and even got to play a solo on stage in front of the convention crowd!”

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

“Don’t see high school as a chore. Find things you enjoy doing, whether it’s a sport or a club, or even some activity unrelated to school that you do with friends when the day is done. If you’ve got your eye on college, pay attention to classes that will set you up for success there. For example, by challenging myself with AP classes in high school, I entered college with enough credits to graduate a year early; saving money in tuition, and allows me to get started in my career that much sooner.”

#### Allison...

- Joined the Warren Hills FFA Chapter in 2003
- Served as a State FFA Officer from 2006-2007
- Attended Cornell University for a DVM, and the University of Minnesota for a MPH
- Is in last year of vet school, doing a concurrent Masters in Public Health
- Plans to work in a small animal practice, and pursue a career related to public health

## ALLISON (KEGGAN) STOUT

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

“The FFA taught me to step outside my comfort zone, look for solutions to problems, and always move forward.”

### How would you define a “good” or “successful” life?

“To me, a successful life means always doing the best you can.”



“FFA members, take advantage of every opportunity that you can. If you have an interest in something, don’t be afraid to learn more about it.”

### How do you spend your spare time?

“I enjoy hiking, dog agility, traveling, reading, and playing board games.”

### What were your favorite FFA moments?

“State FFA Conventions.”



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!

