

## History of the University of Delaware Collegiate FFA

The University of Delaware's Collegiate FFA chapter was chartered on December 3, 1975 under the Delaware Association of Future Farmers of America as it was called then. The notebook submitted in the Delaware State FFA time capsule provided the information about the early years of University of Delaware's Collegiate FFA. The time capsule was opened on March 22, 2005 at the 75<sup>th</sup> annual Delaware State FFA Convention and a notebook was found submitted by Carla Vanderwende, the 1979-1980 Collegiate FFA President. This notebook from the time capsule chronicles the years 1975-1980, the first five years of the UD Collegiate FFA.

The first meeting of the University of Delaware's Collegiate FFA was held on Tuesday, September 30, 1975. A slide presentation answering the question "what is the FFA?" was given by the State FFA President and Vice-President of that year. The rest of that meeting and the next meeting dedicated their time in drafting the organization's FFA Constitution, planning a Program of Activities and electing its officers. The first Constitution of the UD Collegiate FFA is dated October 1, 1975 and is included with the information from the time capsule. The first advisor to the University of Delaware Collegiate FFA was Professor R. Dean Shippy. The very first Collegiate FFA officers were, Barrett Cross, President, Larry Wickersham, Vice President, Brenda Sandidge, Secretary, Ann Shorey, Treasurer, Desi Wanstall, Reporter, Susie Hance, Sentinel, Debbie Nelson, Parliamentarian and Sandra Gerhart, Chaplain. Meetings were held monthly for the remainder of the year and the very first Collegiate FFA chapter banquet was held on May 2, 1976.

New officers were elected at the meeting on September 27, 1976 and a new Program of Activities was drafted. There was also discussion about fundraising projects, the fundraisers for this year were a bake sale and a cheese sale. The second annual Collegiate FFA chapter banquet was held on April 28, 1977. Included in the time capsule material is an article from The Agricultural Education Magazine from August 1977 written by R. Dean Shippy. In this article, Professor Shippy discusses the importance of having Collegiate FFA chapters in universities with Agricultural Education programs. He highlights how many college students in Agricultural Education majors were never members of FFA in high school (over 80% at University of Delaware in Spring 1975) and how crucial it is for future agriculture teachers to know about the FFA. By being members of the Collegiate FFA, these future educators will learn about the FFA and the organization of the chapter, its meetings and its activities. In the words of Professor Shippy, “[The Collegiate FFA] gives pre-service teachers necessary first-hand exposure to the FFA and the competencies they will need in advising their own local chapter at the high school level” (Shippy, p.46).

The next officer elections took place at the meeting on September 26, 1977, as with most other first semester meetings, a new program of activities was discussed and new committees were formed. Activities for this year included a trip to the Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg, a square dance and helping with the State Convention. The third annual banquet was held on May 4, 1978. The first meeting of the next school year took place on September 25, 1978 and the usual business for the first meeting was conducted, election of new officers and preparation of the program of activities. The special activities held this year were an FFA-4H hayride, a trip to the Pennsylvania Farm

Show and a program given by the State officers called "The FFA in Delaware". The Collegiate FFA's fourth annual banquet was held on May 4, 1979. The next year was basically identical to the one previous, the first meeting was held on September 24, 1979 and most of the programs were the same as the year before.

The next set of information available covers the years of 1989 and 1993-2000, information for the 1980's as well as 1990-1993 and 2001-2003 were not able to be found. The FFA changed its name from the Future Farmers of America to the National FFA Organization and that change is shown in the letterhead of correspondences from the National Organization to the Collegiate chapter (i.e. memos and order forms). In 1989-1990 officers were as follows: President, Keith Shane (now an Agriculture teacher at Smyrna High School), Vice President, Randy Risser, Secretary, Nicolette Peters, Treasurer, Ken Diebold, Reporter, Cathy DiBenedetto, Sentinel, Jeff Craig, Chaplain, Karen Knutsen and Parliamentarian, Tom Rausch, Professor R. Dean Shippy still served as Advisor. The important activities this year were Ag Day in which a seed picture project and food booth were presented, the chapter banquet on May 5, 1989 at the Iron Hill Inn and a trip to the State FFA Convention at Delaware State University. Very little information was available for the 1993-1994 school year, there were only 23 listed members of the Collegiate FFA and no information on which members were the officers. The only listed activities were the monthly chapter meetings and participation in Ag Day with seed pictures and a food booth.

Information is also limited for the years 1994-1995 but there are some activities presented. The State FFA Convention was held at the University of Delaware on March 22-23, 1995 in Clayton Hall with similar activities that were held this year. There were

29 people listed on the membership roster and again the Collegiate FFA participated in Ag Day with a food booth. The 1995-1996 Collegiate FFA officers were Colleen Modesto (President), Stacey Warner (Vice President), Kristin Baker (Treasurer), Andrea Stranahan (Secretary), Melissa Goff (Reporter), Nicole Sklarz (Sentinel), Kristin Turner (Chaplain) and Faye Harper (Parliamentarian). This year's membership roster listed 28 students and the two winners of the FFA Scholarship were Kristin Turner, the Collegiate FFA Chaplain and Mark Breeding, who is now an agriculture teacher at Lake Forest High School. The special programs that took place during this school year at the FFA Meetings were "A Look at the State FFA Association and State Convention" presented on February 12, 1996 by Fawn Hollembeak, then the State FFA President, "Career Opportunities in Ag Research" on March 11, 1996 by Dr. William Saylor, a current UD faculty member and "The Herr Foods Angus Farm" on April 8, 1996 by Robert Rohrer, Assistant Manager of Herr Angus Farm. The 20<sup>th</sup> annual Collegiate FFA Banquet was held on May 12 at the Blue and Gold Club.

The 1996-1997 and the 1997-1998 membership rosters both had 28 members listed for the Collegiate FFA. The officers for the 1996-1997 school year were:

President – Kristin Turner	Reporter – Kelly Kuches
Vice President – Fawn Hollembeak	Sentinel – Dale Phillips
Secretary – Elizabeth Salter	Chaplain - Julie Cissel
Treasurer – Julia Filasky	Parliamentarian – Mark Breeding

The officers for the 1997-1998 school year were:

President – Stacey Warner	Reporter – Walter Roshon
Vice President – Brandy Marsich	Sentinel – Randy Mitchell

Secretary – Julie Cissel

Chaplain – Rebecca Voorhees

Treasurer – Elizabeth Salter

Parliamentarian – Dale Phillips

All meeting agendas and lists of activities for these two years are available and most of the activities already described were done. There was a food booth at Ag Day and the Collegiate FFA Banquets were held on May 9, 1997 and on May 14, 1998. The Delaware State FFA Conventions were held on March 19-20, 1997 and March 18-19, 1998. Karen Hutchison spoke at the February 16, 1998 meeting on the future of Agricultural Education in Delaware and a spokesperson for AgWay gave a presentation at the March 16, 1998 Collegiate FFA Meeting.

The information for the 1998-1999 school year is very well organized and clear. The 1998-1999 membership roster lists R. Dean Shippy and J. Richard Bacon as Co-Advisors to the University of Delaware Collegiate FFA Chapter. The officers for this year were Clifford Lawson-President, Robert Proud-Vice President, Elizabeth Salter-Secretary, Christy Vanderwende-Treasurer, Tracy Henderson-Reporter, Erin Motley-Sentinel, Julie Cissel-Chaplain and Dale Phillips-Parliamentarian. The membership roster includes a total of 41 people, including Jackie Hilderbrand, now an agriculture teacher at Newark High School and Christy Vanderwende (Treasurer), now an agriculture teacher at Lake Forest High School. The first meeting of the school year was held in Trabant on September 15, 1998 and there were a lot of introduction activities and the planning of the program of activities was done. The speaker at the October 6, 1998 meeting was Keith Shane, a former Collegiate FFA member, he was by then an agriculture teacher at Smyrna High School and gave a program on “Teaching Agriculture in the New Millennium.” The Poinsettia sale was a key activity during the months of

October and November, a lot of effort was put into making it a success. AgDay was also another activity the Collegiate FFA participated in, the Delaware State FFA Convention was held on March 17-18, 1999 and the Collegiate FFA Banquet was held on May 13, 1999 at the Blue and Gold Club.

The 1999-2000 membership roster lists 44 members of the Collegiate FFA and identifies Mr. Richard Bacon and Dr. Pat Barber as the advisors of the Collegiate chapter. The officers for this school year were: President-Christy Vanderwende, Vice President-Tracy Henderson, Secretary-Jackie Hilderbrand, Treasurer-Katy Lamborn, Reporter-Alissa Anger and Sentinel-David Groff. The meeting agendas are included in the information found and the calendar of events is the first page presented in the binder. The Delaware State FFA Convention was held on March 16-17, 2000 and the banquet was held on May 11, 2000 at the Blue and Gold Club.

There is no other information available about the history of University of Delaware's Collegiate FFA Chapter. The current officers (2004-2005 school year) are:

President – Meredith Stevenson	Sentinel – Greg Stewart
Vice President – Kim Melnick	Historian – Matt Baker
Secretary/Reporter – Elizabeth Harkins	Chaplain – Dan Vassallo
Treasurer – Nicole Russo	

The advisors are still Mr. Bacon and Dr. Barber.

This year has been my first experience working with the FFA and having anything to do with the FFA. At the beginning of this school year, I had no idea what the FFA was and now I know a lot as a result of researching and participating in meetings and activities. I started out by having to study the FFA for the PRAXIS II test in

Agriculture for Delaware teaching certification. Then I became the student advisor for the Collegiate FFA and helped out in meetings and with the Poinsettia sale. Attending the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Delaware State FFA Convention provided me with real hands-on experience about how the FFA conducts itself, what students do during contests (CDE's) and how awards are given out and students recognized for achievement. During the course of ATED 681 and completing this research project, I have learned a great deal more about the structure and function of the National FFA Organization as well as how the UD Collegiate Chapter fits in with the National Organization. I am preparing to help the Collegiate chapter have a fun and effective booth at AgDay and finalizing all the plans for this year's banquet. It has been a great learning experience and I hope that when I become a high school agriculture teacher I will be able to bring a lot of knowledge about the FFA and a lot of new ideas to help my school's chapter grow and improve.

University of Delaware Collegiate FFA Officers  
Who Are Now Delaware Agricultural Educators

Keith Shane	1989-1990 President	Smyrna High School
Mark Breeding	1996-1997 Parliamentarian	Lake Forest High
Christy Vanderwende	1998-1999 Treasurer 1999-2000 President	Lake Forest High
Jackie Kook	1999-2000 Secretary	Newark High School