

2012

# District Officer Candidate

# STUDY

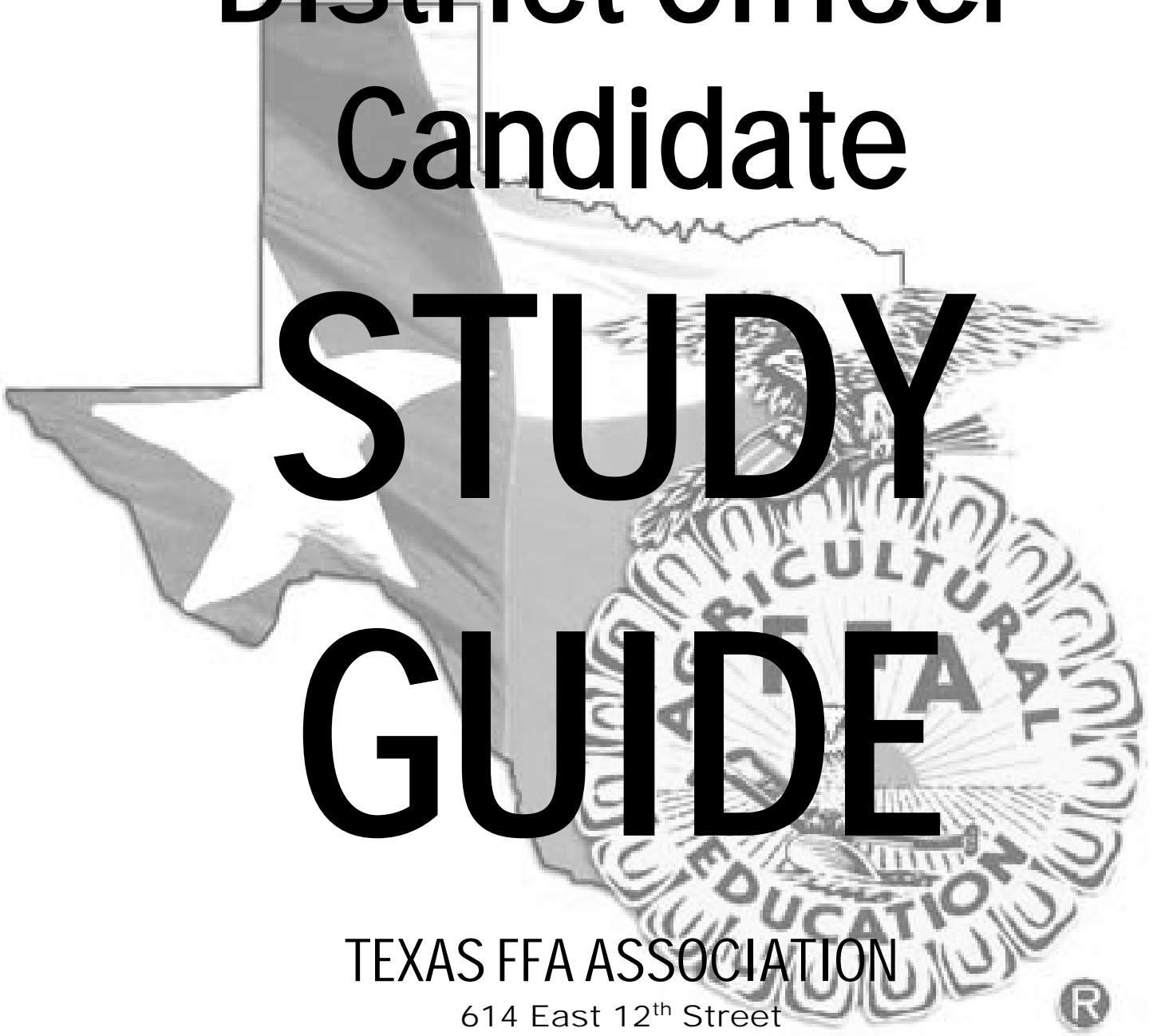
# GUIDE

TEXAS FFA ASSOCIATION

614 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street

Austin, TX 78701

[www.texasffa.org](http://www.texasffa.org)



District Officer Candidate Study Guide

# TEXAS FFA

## AND TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Dear officer candidate:


**Congratulations on taking the first step beyond the chapter level in exerting leadership in the FFA.**

**It's a big step that involves a degree of risk. When you step out and away from the familiar surroundings of your local chapter to ask other members in the district for their vote, there is always a chance of being disappointed. Millions of Americans wrestle with the same discomfort when they file as candidates for city councils, cooperative boards, county commissioner courts, school boards, state legislatures, U.S. Congress and a host of other offices. Because of risk-takers like you, our nation is strong. No matter what happens in your election, you will make the FFA officer election process stronger because of your participation, and you will gain a strength of character that comes from stepping out of ones comfort zone.**

**Each of the Texas FFA's districts have unique election policies and procedures. One of the more common features of these elections is the FFA knowledge test. The purpose of the exam is to assess your level of understanding about the organization since you will be a recognized leader of one of the 57 districts in the nation's largest state FFA association. It is also a measure of your commitment. Before you ask delegates to cast a vote to support your quest for an office, are you willing to put in the time and effort it takes to know and understand the organization you wish to lead?**

**If you are taking an exam on the Texas FFA Association's online testing system, your district officer exam will be comprised of 60 questions evenly split between Parliamentary Guide for FFA by Jarrell D. Gray, the Official FFA Manual and this study guide. All questions are multiple choice and you will have 65 minutes to complete the exam. Once you have finished, the system will indicate that you have successfully completed the exam. If you run out of time, the system will allow you to finish your last question before closing and calculating a score. Test scores will be available to test administrators. District policies vary as to whether or not these scores are released to candidates.**





**Get started early. Be thorough in your preparations so you can do your best. We wish you the very best in your pursuit of an opportunity to make a difference as a district FFA officer.**



**Austin Large  
Leadership Development Coordinator  
Texas FFA Association**

**SECTION 1: TEXAS FFA AND THE TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION**

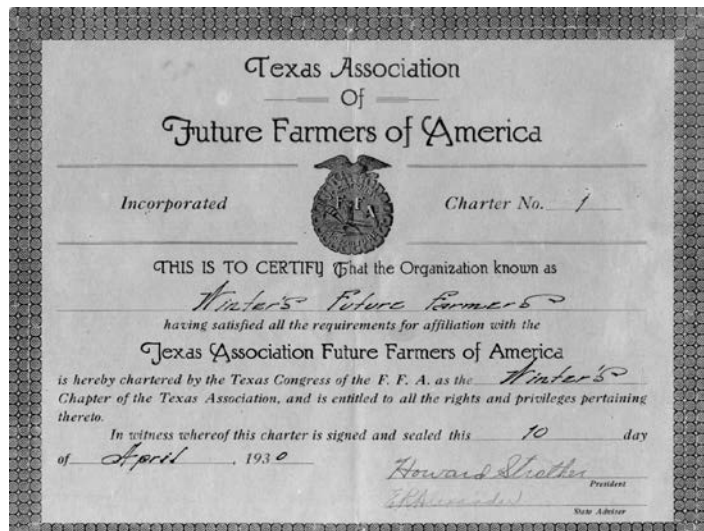
The Texas FFA is the student leadership development arm of Texas Agricultural Education, a coalition of interrelated, interdependent yet independently governed entities committed to delivering exciting opportunities to Texas students through the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Education System. Each organization is led by an executive director and respective board of directors.

			
Texas FFA Association	Texas Education Agency Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources	Texas FFA Foundation	Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas
Student Leadership and Career Development, Curriculum Support	Instructional Program Standards, Certification, Curriculum Development	Fundraising, Strategic Partnerships	Teacher Services, Continuing Education, Legal, Political Advocacy

**SECTION 2: TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND FFA HISTORY**

**Early Beginnings** For agricultural education, the most influential public policy piece was the **Smith-Hughes National Vocational Education Act of 1917** which provided federal funds for vocational agriculture to be taught in public secondary schools. However, in Texas, instruction in agriculture predated this legislation. Mr. B. Youngblood of Henderson introduced an elementary agriculture course in 1903 in the public schools of that east Texas community. In 1907, the Texas Legislature mandated that, with the exception of schools with an academic population of more than 300, all schools in the state would be required to offer the elementary agriculture class. Beginning in 1909, teacher training in agriculture was mandated at designated Texas colleges.

Following the passage of the Smith-Hughes legislation, agriculture departments were established throughout the nation and subsequently many states began forming regional and state future farmer organizations. Virginia established the **Future Farmers of Virginia**, which became a model for other states and ultimately for the formation of a national organization. The first Future Farmers of Texas chapter was organized at Winters in 1928 and the first annual meeting of the FFT was held at College Station on April 22, 1929. **Arthur Ellis of New Waverly** was elected president of the fledgling organization, but resigned his office a few months later, allowing E. J. Hughes of Dublin to serve as acting president until the state association met again in Dallas in October of the same year. At that meeting, **Howard Strother** was elected president of the FFT, and seven days later, a state charter for a Texas FFA Association was issued by the National Future Farmers of America. Thus, Strother became the first president of the



Winters Future Farmers of America was issued the first local chapter charter in 1930. The document was signed by the Texas FFA's first president, Howard Strother and the first state advisor, E. R. Alexander.

Texas Future Farmers of America. Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas (now Texas A&M University) teacher educator **E. R. Alexander** is credited as being the father of the Texas Future Farmer movement and served as the organization's first advisor until 1931. Although Winters was the first chapter charter for the Texas Association to be signed on April 10, 1930 there were more than 13 chapters to be chartered that same day.



Calvin Brints of Crosbyton (above left) and A. D. Pinson (above right) of Neches were the last two state presidents elected to lead separate, segregated agricultural education youth organizations in Texas. Brints was elected state FFA president in 1964, Pinson state NFA president in the same year. 40 years later, they would meet onstage of the 76<sup>th</sup> Texas FFA Convention in Fort Worth.



In 1972, Fred McClure of San Augustine became the first African-American member to serve as president of the Texas FFA. McClure would later serve as National FFA Secretary.

**Breaking Down the Barriers** Segregation is part of our society's history and the history of agricultural education mirrors societal norms and attitudes. In our nation's era of segregation, it was deemed legal and appropriate for African-American students to be relegated to "separate but equal" schools, a practice affirmed by an 1896 U.S. Supreme Court decision, **Plessy v. Ferguson** that upheld state segregation laws. Thus, a separate, parallel organization for agriculture students was created on August 4, 1935—the **New Farmers of America**. The NFA and FFA shared the same core values and had similar traditions. In 1954, the racial wall that separated white and black began to crumble with the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision **Brown v. Topeka Board of Education** that held that separate schools were inherently unequal. The last two state presidents elected under this segregated system were **A. D. Pinson of Neches** (NFA) and Calvin Brints of Crosbyton (FFA). Pinson was subsequently elected as national NFA president, serving in that capacity when the NFA was merged into the FFA in 1965. In 1972, **Fred McClure of San Augustine** was the first African-American member to serve as president of the Texas FFA and later became the first to serve as a national FFA officer in 1973-74, student body president at Texas A&M and an adviser to two U.S. presidents. **Aaron Alejandro of the Boys Ranch Chapter** was the first Hispanic member to be elected president of the Texas FFA and now serves as executive director of the Texas FFA Foundation.

For the first 40 years of its existence, the Future Farmers was exclusively male. In 1935, the delegates to the national FFA convention passed a resolution denying participation to any state association that allowed girls to be listed on the state's official roster. Girls were allowed to participate as FFA Sweethearts and some chapters designated a female student to be the chapter's typist. For several years there was considerable discussion and debate concerning the female question. In 1968, Texas FFA President **Bill Sarpalius**, using the female issue as a bargaining chip to secure additional national delegate representation, moved the motion to admit girls to membership in the national organization. At the 1969 Texas FFA Convention in Fort Worth, with Sarpalius presiding, delegates approved an amendment to the state's constitution giving the green light to admitting girls to membership in the Texas FFA. **Becky Leake of Sherman** became the first female member to serve as a Texas FFA state officer; **Erica Clark of Mansfield** became the first female to be elected president of the Texas FFA Association in 1991.



In 1976, Becky Leake of Sherman became the first female FFA member in Texas to be elected to state FFA office

## Organization of Statewide Alumni and Collegiate Associations

**Engaging the Alumni** Interest in launching an alumni association began as early as 1936 when the Texas FFA adopted language in its constitution that encouraged the formation of alumni chapters, but there is no record of any of these local organizations. A group of past recipients of the state and American degrees known as the **Gold Key Club** emerged. Beeville organized the first of these chapters, but the movement was short-lived, fading away at the close of the 1930's. In 1950 a group of former members founded the Texas Future Farmer Alumni Association. This effort was short-circuited by the military draft that enlisted most of the organization's leadership. Another group convened in the summer of 1953 and called themselves the Young Farmers of Texas. This organization would become linked to the agricultural education's adult education component. The **Texas FFA Alumni Association** as it is known today was organized in 1971. Former Texas FFA Executive Secretary E.C. "Dick" Weekly was the Texas FFA Alumni Association's first president.

**Collegiate FFA chapters** have been in existence since the earliest days of the FFA. Their activities, however, were confined to reaches of each local chapter. In 2001, collegiate representatives met at the state FFA convention in Houston to initiate the process of developing a statewide organization, a process that culminated in the adoption of a state collegiate FFA constitution at the 75<sup>th</sup> Texas FFA Convention in Houston in 2003. Vanessa Brossman of Sam Houston State University was Texas's first Collegiate FFA state president.

**Financing the Future-Texas FFA Foundation** The Texas FFA Foundation came about, in part, due to the gifts of **C. J. "Red" Davidson**, a Fort Worth oilman who, on his morning walk in downtown Fort Worth happened onto a group of well dressed and groomed blue-corduroy-clad boys streaming into the Tarrant County Convention Center. Impressed with their conduct and appearance, he walked into the 41<sup>st</sup> Texas FFA Convention, spending the better part of the morning watching the state officers conduct the business of the state association and give eloquent presentations. This was the beginning of a relationship that resulted in the establishment of the C. J. "Red" Davidson Scholarship. Upon Mr. Davidson's passing, stocks were given to ensure the perpetuation of the scholarship program. The stocks quickly grew in value, and the Texas FFA's leadership realized the need to create a foundation to manage the C.J. "Red" Davidson assets and to raise funds to ensure the future of the Texas FFA. That foundation became a reality in 1987. **Jay Eudy**, then director of agricultural science and technology was the first chairman of the Texas FFA Foundation Board of Directors.

The Texas FFA Foundation kicked off a \$15 million **Capital Campaign** at the 74<sup>th</sup> Texas FFA Convention in Fort Worth in 2002. The campaign was launched with a \$1.3 million gift from the Ford Motor Company and Texas Ford dealers. In 2005, the Texas FFA Foundation announced at the 77<sup>th</sup> Convention that the three-year goal of \$3.5 million had been met and surpassed, with more than \$4.2 million raised. In 2006, the foundation secured the FFA's first **title co-sponsors** of the state convention.



In 2005, the announcement that the Texas FFA Foundation Capital Campaign had met and surpassed its three-year goal brought the confetti down as convention Texas FFA celebrated this significant milestone in an effort to build a \$15 million endowment. The three-year goal was the first of the three stages in the overall endeavor.

**Justin Brands** and **Farm Credit Banks of Texas** teamed up to underwrite a significant portion of the 78<sup>th</sup> Texas FFA Convention in Fort Worth, 79<sup>th</sup> in Corpus Christi, and 80<sup>th</sup> in Lubbock as part of a three-year commitment.

A portion of the Ford gift made possible the construction of the Texas Agricultural Education-FFA Leadership Center in Austin. Prior to its construction, all entities were housed in the VATAT headquarters building at the same address, a building that was built to accommodate only the VATAT and its credit union. Groundbreaking for the project took place in April of 2003 and the building was finished later in November of the same year with official ribbon cutting ceremonies in January, 2004.

Today the Texas FFA Foundation continues its mission to permanently endow Texas FFA programs by forging corporate partnerships, encouraging individual giving and seeking to engage former members in giving back to the program that, for many, was the foundation of a successful career. Current corporate partners include Ag Workers Mutual Auto Insurance, Barefoot Athletics, CEV Multimedia Ltd., Champion Innovations, Farm Credit, Texas Ford Dealers, Fresh Country Fundraising, Fuddruckers, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Justin Brands, La Quinta Inn & Suites, Landmark Nurseries Inc., McCoy's Building Supply Centers, San Antonio Livestock Show and Rodeo, Seitz Fundraising and Texas Farm Bureau.

In addition to corporate interests, individuals have also joined the effort to endow the Texas FFA into perpetuity. Former Texas FFA President and National Officer **Jim Prewitt**, now a prominent Dallas-area nurseryman became the catalyst for the development of the agriscience fair scholarship program. He is one of the leading individual contributors to the Texas FFA Foundation. In 2005, Centerville Rancher **Richard Wallrath** made Texas FFA history by becoming the Texas FFA Foundation's all-time leading contributor with gifts totaling more than \$1.5 million.

### SECTION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



**Headquarters** The Texas FFA Association is headquartered at the Agricultural Education-Ford Texas FFA Leadership Center two blocks east of the Texas State Capitol at 614 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street in Austin. The building, completed in 2003, was made possible by a gift from Ford Motor Company and Texas Ford Dealers and also houses two other Texas Agricultural Education entities—the Texas FFA Foundation and the Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas.

#### **Texas FFA Association Board of Directors**

Chairperson  
Sandra Choate, Athens

Vice Chairperson  
David Reiley, Seguin

Treasurer  
Barney McClure, Austin

Aaron Alejandro, Austin  
Zach Brady, Lubbock  
Horace Hodge, Prairie View  
Stefan Marchman, Fort Worth  
Justin Risner, Pollok  
Charles Prause, Bosequeville  
John Steelhammer, Mathis  
Kevin Swor, Diboll  
Russell Thomas, Gilmer  
Gary VanDeaver, Ph.D., New Boston  
Randall Williams, Ph.D., Kingsville

Ex-officio Board Members  
Ronald Whitson, Austin  
Kelly White, Austin

Executive Director  
Tom Maynard, Austin



Tom Maynard is the Executive Director of the Texas FFA Association

Sandra Choate of Athens serves as 2011-12 Chairman of the Texas FFA Board of Directors.

**Board of Directors** The Texas FFA Association provides leadership and management for active, junior, collegiate and alumni FFA members. A 14- board of directors, comprised of active agricultural educators, business and industry representatives and the managerial leadership of the VATAT and Texas FFA Foundation, meets quarterly and provides governance and leadership to the state association. Five current Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources teachers are elected to the board by the Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas. Five business and industry representatives, a teacher educator and an additional



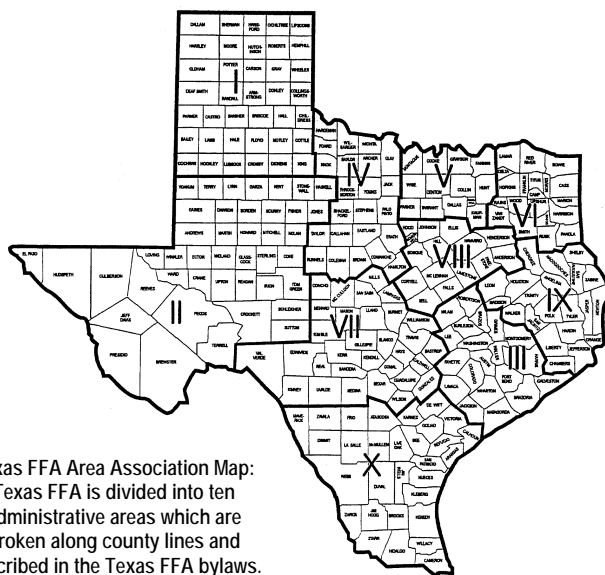
Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources teacher are elected to the board by a nominating committee process. The executive directors of the VATAT and Texas FFA Foundation serve on the board. The state program director for Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Texas Education Agency along with representatives of the alumni and collegiate associations serve as ex-officio members of the board.

**Executive Board** The Texas FFA Association’s executive board includes the chairman of the board of directors, the executive directors of the Texas FFA Association, Texas FFA Foundation, Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas, the program director for Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, TEA and the state FFA president or another designated student officer. The executive board interprets policy and renders decisions deemed to be more than a management decision, handles appeals and other administrative matters presented by the executive director.



2011-12 Texas FFA Officers Back Row L-R: Kelli Neuman, Vice President-Area IV, East Chambers; Heston Heller, Vice President-Area II, Anson; Taylor Shakleford, First Vice President- Area V, Prosper; Sheldon Franks, Vice President- Area I, Follett; Kristi Kelley, Vice President- Area X, Sharyland; Front Row L-R: Kyle Schmidt, Vice President- Area III, Waller; Alyssa Spruill, Vice President-Area IV, Stephenville; Abby Prause, Vice President-Area VIII, Bosqueville; Shelbie Thames, Vice President- Area VII, East Central, Peyton Gilbert, President- Area VI, Whitehouse

**Board of Student Officers** Ten student officers represent each of the area associations on the board of student officers who work in partnership with the board of directors to develop policy for the Texas FFA Association and provide student leadership to Texas FFA members. Each area association elects one officer to the state officer team and the delegates at the state convention elect a president and first vice president from the field of ten incoming officers. The balance of the team serve as vice presidents from their respective area associations. All officers have responsibilities to the state association and leadership duties in their areas. State officers serve a one-year term.



Texas FFA Area Association Map: Texas FFA is divided into ten administrative areas which are broken along county lines and described in the Texas FFA bylaws.

**Administrative Subdivisions: districts and areas** The state is divided into ten administrative areas which operate as semi-autonomous associations. Texas has had as many as twelve areas, since initially, the areas were a function of state education agency staffing. At one time each of these areas was the territory for an area supervisor who provided direct oversight of local departments. Currently, each area has a leadership structure headed by an area coordinator and/or area teacher president. Each area is further divided into districts. The number of districts per area ranges from four to seven, and there are 57 districts in the state. According to the state bylaws, the state must consider re-alignment at least every ten years and the areas must consider re-districting at least every five years.



Robert Scott has served as Texas Commissioner of Education since 2007.

Ronald Whitson TEA Program Director for Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources.

**Texas FFA Association and the Texas Education Agency.** The **Texas Education Agency** provides leadership for all of Texas education and is headed by **State Education Commissioner Robert Scott**. Members of the State Board of Education are elected. Its chairman is appointed from the members of the board by the Governor. Currently, **Barbara Cargill of The Woodlands** chairs the state board. For a significant portion of its history, the Texas FFA Association operated through the Texas Education Agency, and FFA staff members were TEA employees. In 1998, the FFA was moved outside of the agency and a board of directors made up of agricultural educators and industry representatives was established to provide leadership for the organization. The Texas

FFA Association's executive director is employed by the Board of Directors. **Ronald Whitson** is the program director for Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources and provides instructional and curricular leadership for Texas agricultural education. In this role, Mr. Whitson is responsible for curriculum development, textbook adoption, instructional program standards and teacher certification and in-service. FFA is an integral part of the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources instructional program, and it is critical that the FFA remain tied to this foundation. Although the relationship of the TEA and FFA has changed in recent years, the program director remains actively engaged in the leadership of the Texas FFA as an ex-officio member of the board of directors and as a member of the executive board.

**Texas FFA Staff** The Texas FFA Association has four employees. The executive director, leadership development coordinator and membership services coordinator are full-time Texas FFA Association employees. The budget and finance coordinator is an employee of the Texas FFA but shares financial management responsibilities with the VATAT, Texas FFA Foundation, Texas Young Farmers and the



Pat Fancher, (left) serves as the Texas FFA's budget and finance coordinator; Austin Large (center) serves as leadership development coordinator and Tricia Sullivan (right) is the membership services coordinator.

Texas Career and Technology Council. The VATAT communications director is editor of the Texas FFA News, which is mailed as an insert in FFA—New Horizons, the National FFA Organization's magazine. Other work is accomplished through contract labor and volunteers.



Julie Vrazel is the communications director for Texas Agricultural Education and serves as editor of the Texas FFA News.

**Communications** Texas FFA Association disseminates news and information through a variety of media avenues. Allison Bequette serves as communication coordinator for Texas Agricultural Education and handles media for the Texas FFA Association.

- ***Texas FFA News Online*** is the official magazine of the Texas FFA Association and is delivered electronically each month at [news.texasffa.org](http://news.texasffa.org). Members receive a postcard with magazine login information. 2010-11 was the first year for the magazine to be exclusively web-based.
- ***Convention Chronicle*** is the Texas FFA Association's student-operated convention newspaper. Texas FFA members apply for positions on the *Convention Chronicle* staff and work throughout the convention to produce three daily issues of the newspaper. Through their involvement, members gain real-life, hands-on experience in the operations of a daily newspaper.
- ***www.texasffa.org*** is the Texas FFA Association's Web site. General information, policies, event rules, support materials, news and updates can be found online. Additionally, websites for



collegiate and alumni associations and the other members of the Texas Agricultural Education Family can be accessed from the Texas FFA’s home on the World Wide Web.



Aaron Alejandro is the Executive Director of the Texas FFA Foundation



Dan Taylor of Ropesville chairs the Texas FFA Foundation Board of Directors

**Leadership and Organizational Structure of Other Agricultural Education Entities**

The **Texas FFA Foundation** Established in 1987 exclusively for the benefit of the Texas FFA and its members, the Texas FFA Foundation is the fundraising arm of the Texas Agricultural Education. Leadership for the foundation’s activities is provided by a board of directors, and managerial leadership is administered by an executive director. The foundation board may have as many as 27 directors, but currently has 22. The foundation is in the midst of a long-term campaign to permanently endow Texas FFA programs and scholarships. The executive director of the Texas FFA Foundation is a member of the Texas FFA Association board of directors and executive board.



Barney McClure is the VATAT's executive director and serves as the Texas FFA's treasurer



2011-12 VATAT President is Russell Thomas of Gilmer.

**Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas** The VATAT was established in 1940 and chartered in 1951 to provide a voice for Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources teachers in the educational policy-making process, recognition for educator achievements and professional services. Leadership for the organization comes from an elected board of directors. Directors are apportioned by teacher membership in each of the ten area associations—one director per 28 members with a minimum of two directors per area. Currently, the board has a membership of 61. An executive director provides managerial leadership and is the political officer of the Texas Agricultural Education. The VATAT elects five of its members to the Texas FFA Board of Directors. The VATAT executive director is a Texas FFA board member by position and serves as Texas FFA treasurer.



Kelly White, Texas FFA Alumni President

The **Texas FFA Alumni Association** operates under the auspices of the Texas FFA Board of Directors in accordance to policies contained in the organization’s memorandum of understanding and operating policies. The purpose of local alumni affiliates is to provide support to local Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources departments and the state association is to provide assistance to local affiliates. A 23-member alumni council provides direction and leadership to the organization in harmony with administrative oversight and board policies and directives. Texas FFA Alumni accounts are managed by the Texas FFA Association staff. The Texas FFA Alumni Association holds their annual meeting in conjunction with the state FFA convention and provides financial support to the Texas FFA Association and the Texas FFA Foundation. **Kelly White of Del Valle** serves as the president of the Texas FFA Alumni Association. The Past State Officers Alumni is a statewide alumni association affiliated with the Texas FFA Association.

**SECTION 4: JOINING THE TEXAS FFA: MEMBERSHIP**

**Active Membership** Those who had the foresight, vision and leadership to establish the FFA wrote to future generations a promissory note—a check. The first step in cashing that check—taking advantage of this remarkable opportunity—is to join. Texas FFA membership has grown since 2001. In the last ten years, net membership growth is +24,790. Fall, 2011 membership represents an all-time record.

## Texas FFA Membership 2001-Fall, 2011

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Fall, 2011
56,904	57,251	58,949	60,981	61,332	61,130	62,708	63,331	62,967	81,694	84,723

**The Integral Nature of FFA and Agricultural Education** The Texas FFA Association is the organization of, by, and for students enrolled in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources programs and pursuant to the **Texas Education Code Section 29.182**, is an **integral** part of the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Career and Technical Education program. The FFA Organization is an integral part of agricultural education, a leadership development program for students of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources programs. FFA programs are intended to be applied activities related to the classroom and laboratory instructional programs. Thus, membership guidelines should reflect this philosophy and support enrollment in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources courses.

**Enrollment Requirement for Active Membership** Active membership in the Texas FFA Association is established by enrolling in an approved Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources course taught by an instructor with the appropriate credentials. In some cases in which the local Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources instructor is teaching agricultural classes that are not approved by the State Board of Education, but are similar in objectives to approved classes, course substitutions can be made in accordance to current board policy. With increasing graduation requirements, Texas FFA Association has established policies which support enrollment while giving a student some degree of flexibility in maintaining continuous membership to apply for degrees and awards. After completing two consecutive courses, they may maintain continuous membership for a maximum of one year while not enrolled in a course provided they maintain an approved supervised experience program which is documented in an approved record book. The “year” referenced in this policy is a **membership year** which **begins September 1** and **ends on August 31**. For the purposes of the membership eligibility policy, two classes taken concurrently count as two consecutive classes. After re-enrolling and completing one Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources course, a student is eligible to maintain one more year of membership without re-enrollment provided an approved, documented SAEP is in place. This policy does not negate more stringent enrollment requirements for participation in leadership development events, speaking development events, career development events or any other activity that has an enrollment standard. This does not preclude local chapters and other associations from adopting more stringent enrollment requirements for membership or for holding elected offices.

**Membership Dues** Texas FFA Association state dues are \$5.00 for active members. In addition to state dues, a student must also pay local, district, area and national dues. National dues are \$7.00. Local, district and area dues are set by the respective associations. Membership dues are used to support operations and activities that are of benefit to all members. For the fall semester, rosters must be submitted electronically via the Texas FFA online roster management system and dues must be postmarked by **November 1** to be in good standing with the state association and March 1 for students joining in the spring semester. Dues are paid annually, and the membership year begins September 1 and expires on August 31. In 2009-10, Texas piloted a national **affiliation fee model program** which allows chapters to pay an affiliation fee based on total instructional program enrollment, plus other non-enrolled members. This approach allows some programs to access other funds to make students eligible to participate in the FFA activities. The membership submission deadline for **delegate counts** is **March 10**.

**Other Membership Requirements** In addition to meeting enrollment/SAE and dues requirements, to be a Texas FFA member, a student must show an interest in the affairs of the association by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership, and participating in other organized activities of the chapter and display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the Texas FFA Association/Texas Association of Future Farmers of America. Local chapters may adopt more stringent membership requirements. **Class enrollment** is required for Texas FFA administered **competitive events**.

**Degrees of Membership** Three degrees of membership are bestowed by the local chapter—the Discovery, Greenhand and Chapter Degrees. The State FFA Degree, known as the Lone Star FFA Degree in Texas, is the highest degree of membership that can be bestowed by the Texas FFA Association and is awarded annually at the state convention held in July. The American Degree is awarded by the National FFA Organization, but applicants must submit application to the state association for approval and submission to the national level. Degrees are not competitive amongst students and the state has no limit on the number of members who may receive a degree in a given year. If a member meets the constitutional standard, they may receive the degree, provided records and state degree application have been completed and submitted in compliance to all deadlines and related state policies. The process of inspecting record books and checking application is called the degree check. The degree check process begins in each of the state’s 57 districts and culminates in the state degree check held at a place designated by the state executive director with the advice and consent of the board of directors.

### **Other FFA Membership Types**

**Junior Membership** Junior membership, initiated in 1987, is a feature unique to Texas. Active chapters in good standing may establish junior FFA programs for students enrolled in the local chapter’s school district who are in the **third grade and eight years old**. These students may continue their junior membership until they become eligible to enroll in the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources program. Junior members must be affiliated with a chapter in the school district in which they are enrolled unless the school district approves a waiver for out of district students. School superintendents must approve and certify in writing out of district students to participate in the junior FFA program(s) of their district. Such waivers must be submitted annually. Junior members typically enjoy benefits provided by local chapters are eligible to compete in the state’s major livestock shows and in most county shows and participate in other competitions sponsored by other FFA partners. Junior members are not eligible to participate in Texas FFA governed events or cast votes in the business of the association. Junior membership dues, rosters and waivers must be postmarked by **December 1**.

**Collegiate Membership** Collegiate membership is open to all post-secondary students enrolled in a two or four-year college or university and interested in career objectives in agriculture or who have an interest in the welfare of the agricultural industry. Collegiate members must pay local and state dues to be a member in good standing.

**Alumni Membership** One need not be a former member to be a member of the Texas FFA Alumni—just a **supporter of agricultural education and the FFA**. Those desiring to join this movement can join a local affiliate by paying \$15 annual state/national dues in addition to local dues or becoming a lifetime national member by paying a one-time dues installment of \$150. Those who wish to join but do not have a local affiliate to join may become an at-large member. Past state FFA officers and past state staff members may join the Texas FFA Association’s Past State Officer FFA Alumni Affiliate.

**Honorary Membership** Local chapters have the opportunity to bestow honorary membership on those community members who have rendered outstanding service to the local program and to the cause of the agricultural education and FFA. The state association bestows honorary membership on those who render outstanding service to the Texas FFA and Texas Agricultural Education. Each of the area associations have the opportunity to award an honorary membership in the form of the Honorary Lone Star FFA Degree to a number of worthy non-teacher recipients not to exceed ten percent of the number of regular state degrees from the previous year. Active teachers may receive the Honorary Lone Star Degree by meeting the criteria described in the Texas FFA Association Policy Handbook.

## **SECTION 5: PREMIER LEADERSHIP**

The Texas FFA’s **primary leadership development vehicle** is the local chapter. State and area leadership development programs are geared to strengthen local chapters through which members learn to function as part of an effective team, plan and implement strategies, lead and serve on committees and fiduciary responsibility

**Chapter Officers and Committee Chairs** All local chapters should have functioning officers and committee chairs. Each of the components of the National FFA Organization’s Quality Standards for Local Chapters should be represented by an active standing committee charged with clear and measurable objectives. Leadership means exerting influence and FFA members should learn to exercise leadership in the context of an organization.

**Area and District Officers** Student officers are elected to conduct the members’ business at each organizational levels—district and area. These officers are expected to conduct meetings, camps and workshops and represent their respective associations.



2011-12 State President Peyton Gilbert of Whitehouse (Right) and State First Vice President Taylor Shackelford of Prosper (Left) will visit communities and schools across Texas in this Ford F-150. The truck and its special decal design were made possible by the Texas FFA Foundation’s corporate partnership with the Ford Motor Company.

**State Officers** It is a remarkable opportunity to serve as a Texas FFA state officer. Ten members are elected to work on behalf of their fellow Texas FFA members in this capacity. Officers are elected via a process at the area level that includes an exam, an interview process and popular vote. Officers must hold the **State FFA Degree** at the time of the state election and must be no more than one year removed from high school graduation. A president and vice president are elected from the ten incoming officers. These two officers

take a one-year leave of absence from college studies to serve as the Texas FFA’s travel team, visiting three schools a day representing the Texas FFA and delivering motivational workshops to students, teachers, administrators and other interested parties.

**National Officers** 29 Texans have served as national officers beginning with **Roy Martin** of Cotulla, the first from the state to be elected to the six-member national officer team in 1936-1937. Bobby Tucker of Mineola was the first of six Texans to serve as national president. **Randa Braune** of **Bellville** serves as the most recent National Officer from Texas in 2009-2010. National officer candidates are nominated by a student

Texas FFA members have an opportunity to exert influence on a national scale, not only as delegates, but also via a grassroots process through which any member can have an submit an issue and possibly have it debated and discussed by national delegates.

committee composed of area officers from each of the state’s ten areas and led by an at-large student chairperson. The committee convenes before the annual state convention to examine each declared candidate using a system approach that closely mirrors the national selection process. The committee submits its selection to the delegate body.



**National Convention Delegates** Each state FFA association is allotted a number of voting delegates to the National FFA Convention based on membership. In 2010, **59 of the 475** national delegates were

Texans. The state's ten-member officer team serves as part of the delegation and the area associations are given the opportunity to select members to travel to the national convention to represent the interests of the state's members in conducting the National FFA Organization's business. The **national delegate process** starts long before the national convention. In reality, it begins as a **grassroots process** through which any member has the opportunity to have an issue or idea considered at the national level. One of an area officer's first responsibilities is to gather concerns and issues regarding the National FFA Organization. These are funneled to the state leadership conference in June, at which time a student national issues committee examines all forwarded issues and submits a report to the Texas FFA Board of Directors and to the National FFA Organization. These issues, along with other issues forwarded by other states are considered by the delegates to the National State President's Conference in Washington, D.C. Issues deemed to be most important are selected and become national delegate issues. All national delegates are assigned to issue committees which consider one of the critical issues and hold public hearings. Each committee develops recommendations which are presented to the delegate body and upon approval, to the National FFA Board of Directors.



The 2011 State Leadership Conference was held at Lone Oak Ranch near Gainesville, north of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex

**Leadership Conferences** Learning doesn't stop when schools close for the hot summer months. Thousands of Texas FFA members attend area and district leadership camps and conferences held in across the state. The Texas FFA Association's approach to leadership development is "learning by doing" through **peer instruction**. Each year, the state's **74 area officers** attend the state leadership conference held in early June. State officers organize the conference and provide the instruction with the goal of equipping area officers to conduct area conferences for district

and chapter officers. All of the state's ten areas and a number of districts conduct leadership conferences.

**Ford Leadership Scholars** In September, 2009, the Texas FFA Board of Directors approved the Ford Leadership Scholars, a cutting-edge leadership development program. An application process begins in January and includes a reading assignment, test, telephone interview and finally a face-to-face behavioral interview. Ten members are selected by a committee of industry professionals to participate in an intense six-month program that includes industry tours, hands-on projects and mentoring by recognized industry leaders.

**State Convention** The state Convention is the highlight of the year for the Texas FFA. Each year, 10,000 to 11,000 active, collegiate and alumni members, guests and other supporters convene to recognize Texas FFA's degree, award and scholarship recipients, compete for state talent competition honors, elect new officers, conduct the state association's business and hear from inspiring speakers. In addition to main stage events, the convention features a statewide community service project, top entertainment acts, the Texas FFA State Rodeo Finals, leadership Development workshops, the state public speaking finals, the agriscience fair, the Collegiate and Alumni FFA conventions and the Texas FFA Alumni Benefit



Auction. State convention sites are selected by the Texas FFA Board of Directors, usually five years in advance of each convention. The 81<sup>st</sup> Texas FFA Convention in 2009, held in Dallas had a record attendance of 11,755. The 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas FFA Convention in 2011 was held in Lubbock and had an attendance of 10,236. Future convention sites are: 2012 - Corpus Christi; 2013 - Dallas; 2014 - Fort Worth; 2015 – Corpus Christi.