

## FFA ALUMNI - THROUGH THE YEARS

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**1969** – The delegate body of the National FFA Convention established the alumni class of membership as part of the National FFA Constitution.

A temporary executive council, approved by the National FFA Board of Directors and National FFA Officers, developed the National FFA Alumni Association with a tentative constitution, bylaws and budget.

**1970** – The National FFA Board of Directors and National FFA Officers authorized a loan of \$50,000 to develop and implement the Alumni Association.

Gus Douglass  
Chairman

Dr. James P. Clouse  
Vice Chairman

Jay Benham  
Administrative Secretary

The Life Membership class was created and a quarterly newsletter was developed.

**1971** – Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas and Wyoming chartered at the National FFA Convention.

**1972** – An organizational meeting was held in Chicago (on May 12) with 33 states represented (30 chartered). New charters included: Alabama, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

The first annual meeting of the National FFA Alumni Association took place. Nine states were chartered: Arizona, Connecticut, Idaho, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada and South Carolina.

The official FFA Alumni emblem was adopted and a plan for reimbursing states \$1 per member when alumni membership met or exceeded total FFA membership in that state.

A memorial fund for life membership was established.

Multiple year memberships were established and the Legion of Merit Citation was sanctioned.

Several Alumni retail items were developed by the National FFA Supply Service.

**1973** – During the second annual meeting, charters were established by Arkansas, New Mexico, New York, Vermont and Washington and 98 Legion of Merit Citations were presented.

Delegates voted to add the Alumni Relations Division to the FFA Program of Activities.

**1974** – The first FFA Alumni Program of Action was adopted along with a constitutional amendment which opened FFA Alumni membership to all individuals interested in promoting vocational agriculture and the FFA.

The first Outstanding Achievement Awards were presented to Jerry Litton, Orion Samuelson and William Kuhfuss at the National Convention.

**1976** – Jay Benham, Administrative Secretary, resigned.

Robert W. "Woody" Cox was selected to fill the vacancy and the title of administrative secretary was changed to executive director.

## FFA ALUMNI - THROUGH THE YEARS (Continued)

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**1977** – Leadership workshops were developed and became a highlight of the National FFA Convention.

A strong working relationship was established with the National FFA Foundation.

Alumni became a representative member of the Sponsor's Advisory Board (now known as the Sponsor's Board). A major thrust of the FFA Alumni was to promote the Executive Sponsor Program (Alumni received a portion of the contributions.)

Alumni began a money-making project for local affiliates developed by Ace Nut and Bolt Company and its former president, Bob Wohlford.

**1978** – The FFA Committee on Government was instituted and became an active standing committee. David C. Thomas served as the first chair from 1978-82.

**1983** – Alaska became the forty-ninth state to charter.

**1984** – In total, \$185,000 had been extended to the Alumni to develop and promote its growth. In January 1984, at the first joint meeting of the National Board of Directors and the National FFA Alumni Council, Alumni repayment of \$100,000 was made to the National FFA Organization. Since 1984, the remaining balance has been paid.

**1985** – The first annual Alumni-sponsored Auction was held. FFA Leadership Scholarships are funded from the annual auction.

**1987** – The first FFA Alumni State Leaders Conference, sponsored by Philip Morris USA, was held at the National FFA Center.

**1991** – Restructuring of the National FFA Organization was approved by the National FFA Board of Directors. As a result of the restructuring, the FFA Alumni became an affiliated association.

The FFA Alumni began its own supply service and the budget and operations were separated from the administrative operations of the National FFA Organization.

The FFA Alumni and the National Vocational Agricultural Teachers Association approved a working agreement that improved the governmental affairs activities of both organizations.

**1995** – Robert W. "Woody" Cox resigned and Ricardo L. Valencia was installed as the executive director.

**1996** – An official national spokesperson, Ty England (country music artist), was established.

**1997** – Ricardo L. Valencia vacates the position of executive director. Gene A. Starr was selected as the new executive director.

**1998** – The National FFA Alumni Association moved to its new location at The National FFA Center in Indianapolis, Indiana.

**1999** – The 28<sup>th</sup> National FFA Alumni Convention was held in Louisville, Kentucky. The 15<sup>th</sup> annual Alumni Auction reached the \$100,000 mark.

Twenty \$1000 chapter grants were awarded for the first time to local FFA chapters.