Just One. One moment, one encounter, one opportunity is all it takes to radically change the course of our lives. This year, our team has chosen “Just One” as our theme because we recognize the importance of each individual “Just One” step toward growth as we work toward our vision of growing leaders, building communities and strengthening agriculture. Changing the world sounds like a daunting task at times, yet we believe FFA members can change the world every day by Just One simple action. Just One embodies the idea that our FFA experiences were powerful because we took Just One chance and stepped out of our comfort zones. We hope to encourage members to take Just One risk. Just One step. Just One moment of courage. We are capable of shaping the future of agriculture, our homes, communities and the United States of America, when we believe in the power of Just One!

– 2017-18 National FFA Officer Team

NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

169 AMERICAN FFA DEGREE RECIPIENTS
13 NATIONAL THREE STAR CHAPTERS
21 PROFICIENCY AWARD FINALISTS
2 AMERICAN STAR FINALISTS
26 AGRISCIENCE FINALISTS
3 PREMIER CHAPTERS

Just One for the books, Oklahoma FFA!
The great thing is that this home is also building a foundation for our future. Every single area I have just discussed will take you down a road to success if you are willing to travel it.

FFA members, Audrey Hepburn said it best: “Nothing is impossible. The word itself says I’m possible!”

Whether you have set goals such as winning the state speech contest, riding in the limo at the Oklahoma Youth Expo or becoming a state FFA officer, you are all fully capable of doing anything you set your mind to. All you have to do is work hard, have a lot of determination and, regardless of what anyone says, never give up.

FFA members, your agricultural education classes and FFA are going to provide you with the stepping stones you need to set your goals, but it is up to you to strive to reach those goals.

Think about your own agricultural education experience for a moment. Whether you are an eighth grader, freshman, sophomore or even a senior, what was that one thing that sparked your interest?

Maybe you are the student who just has a knack for public speaking. Maybe you are the students who is always more than willing to work behind the scenes, or maybe you are a livestock student who looks forward to getting home every day to work with your project.

You could also be that shop kid who has an imagination for creating new things, or maybe you are the science fair genius who enjoys using the scientific method to solve problems for future generations of agriculturists.

FFA members, I could go on for hours listing different ways to be involved in our organization because there are so many opportunities. No matter which of these scenarios describes you, agricultural education and FFA has provided a home for all of us.
If you attended session four of Alumni Camp, you might remember when my teammate, Jake Landrum, was asked to describe each of the state officers using only one word. The word he chose for me was honest. It was one of the greatest compliments I had received in a while.

You see, when I began my journey towards becoming a state FFA officer, I set one goal: to be as open and honest as possible with my fellow FFA members.

I knew when I dove into this adventure that I was not the best in many aspects. I was not the best public speaker. I was not the best in my Career Development Event. I was definitely not the best showman. I was never chapter president, and the list goes on.

There was one thing I was the best at, though: being authentic. I took that quality and ran with it. Everywhere I went, I chose to be completely transparent and genuine with everyone I came across. I still hold myself to this standard, and I will for the rest of my life. I truly believe if it weren’t for that promise, I would not be standing where I am today.

FFA members, I encourage you to be genuine and honest in all that you do. Always remember that ribbons will fade, trophies will collect dust and medals will be stored in a box one day. It is the kindness you show others that lasts the longest.
Teachable moment. A phrase that my ag teacher, Holly Drake, used to say, typically after an important lesson, whether about hooking up a trailer or about life. She often shared these teachable moments that in the instant did not seem to be a big deal, but I soon discovered their importance.

The truth is that life is full of teachable moments, but often we overlook the lessons that lie in even the simplest of times. We should strive to look for the teachable moment in every situation life throws at us, whether good or bad.

Sometimes the lesson is not easily apparent; sometimes we must think differently to fully comprehend what a situation will become and what it can teach us. No matter the situation or outcome there is surely always a message in it.

Wins taught me to remain humble; failures taught me to be grateful and never give up.

My ag teacher played a very important role throughout my FFA career because without her I would have never taken the initiative to think differently and challenge myself. She taught me a lot about life and agriculture through those teachable moments that I will forever cherish.

FFA members, I challenge you to discover the teachable moments that lie within everything we do and all the experiences we go through. There will be challenging times that come in the next year but I believe that if we are able to seek out the reason and lesson encompassed, then we will be able to use that to grow as leaders.

This year I encourage you to be thankful for the experiences and opportunities that will come before you because they are what make you who you are. They are your teachable moments. Pursue them.
Take a minute and think about a role model that you have in your life. Have one? Now, I want you to write down why that person comes to mind, what characteristics he or she possesses, and what that person does to be a role model.

Role models in our lives are those people who inspire us daily to make the right choices and believe in ourselves and who allow us to have confidence in who we are. These chosen individuals are ones that we look to for advice, a positive word or even a helping hand.

Maybe your role model is someone who conveys a message of wisdom every time you see or hear from that person.

Role models are those people who continuously remind us of how we should lead and act. My greatest role models are those who truly are, remind me of what my goals are and have confidence in everything they do.

FFA members, you are in the perfect position to be role models for someone else. Look back at your list of things you wrote down about your role model and ask yourself, “Am I being this person for someone else?” You see, when you are in a leadership role, others constantly watch you.

Being a good role model is simple, however. A good role model is one who is respectful, knowledgeable, unique and selfless. I believe that every person can choose to be these things to make someone else’s day a little brighter or to make a positive impact on another person. Being a good role model truly has everything to do with being yourself and leading by example.

FFA members, sit down and think about how you can be a positive role model. Take those characteristics from your role models and implement them into your own life. Being a leader for others to follow is an action that is so rewarding. I promise you are someone’s role model, so make every day count.
“We are coming in Live! Hello from Watertown, Wisconsin!”
Or Modesto, California.
Or Clifton Park, New York.
Or Kilkenny, Ireland.

Each Friday between noon and 1 p.m., Claremore FFA members are “learning to do” through virtual field trips across the country and occasionally the world. Using Google Meet and FaceTime, students livestream an agricultural producer or advocate into their classroom for a farm tour and interview. They are connecting with agriculturalists and experiencing the diversity of agricultural industry. By the end of the school year, the students in Matt Boyer’s class will have experienced a Wisconsin dairy farm, honey bee pollination of almond trees in California, beef farms across the nation and will discover how to influence consumers through social media.

Boyer’s Facebook post, introducing the concept to his chapter says it best.

Matt Boyer is with Alyssa May and 5 others.
July 20

NEWS FLASH…..

Agriculture is such a broad and unique industry that has so many opportunities to experience. Have you ever seen an almond harvest in California? How about talking with a food critic and professional food blogger in New York? What do you know about public grazing lands in Elko, Nevada or raising sheep in Union Center, South Dakota? How about riding along with the young lady who manages the beef cattle herd for the University of California, Davis in the foothills of Northern California or ranching in the mountains of Garrett, Wyoming with only a 30 day growing period. The list goes on & on & on!!
It all began this summer when Boyer made a Facebook post on the Masters of Beef Advocacy Facebook group inviting farmers and ranchers to share their stories with his students.

“It took off!” Boyer says. “So many people reached out offering to do a demo of whatever their forte was. I thought, ‘Now, I have to figure out how I’m going to do this.’”

A brainstorm with his FFA officer team produced the name #FieldTripFriday. The concept was approved by the administration, and the school’s IT department helped set up the equipment needed. Two test pilots were conducted before the school year started, confirming the classroom was ready to transport Claremore students to any location with an internet connection.

“This experience gives students the opportunity to see things they might never have the opportunity to see,” explains Boyer. “I love technology. It has so much to offer us. It is just a matter of finding a good use for it.”

In a large school like Claremore, where students have so many options, Boyer feels this learning strategy helps him capture the students’ attention.

Boyer continues, “I have been teaching 15 years. How do I stay relevant? How do I bring student-based technology into my classroom? The students are using many types of social media. I can’t let them Snapchat in class, but I can bring social media in as a learning opportunity.”

The ag teacher sees other opportunities to expand the reach of this experience beyond the livestreaming event. With permission of the speaker, the hour-long experience is recorded and can be delivered as supporting material for other units he teaches throughout the year.

The excitement has spread beyond just students. Boyer explains, “Some teachers will ask, ‘Where are you going for Field Trip Friday this week?’”

On occasion, faculty and staff join the fun and allow other students to participate in certain field trips.

Chapters interested in hosting their own virtual field trips can follow Claremore’s example. Boyer provides an information sheet about the chapter along with a list of presentation tips including video quality, lighting, how to forward calls while livestreaming and much more. He also performs a mock run-through for calls with questionable service, such as when preparing to stream to rural Ireland. Boyer shares that his preparation list often spurs the presenter to share a YouTube video or a list of “things to know” about their own operation. This primes the class with basic information before the presentation begins, yielding deeper learning from the conversation and tour.

Finally, Boyer has one downside to share, “The hard part is, I only have so many chairs and so many Fridays.”

2018 Schedule:

August 24
Mazeppa, Minnesota

September 7
Milford, Wisconsin

September 21
Modesto, California

September 28
Capitan, New Mexico

October 12
Kilkenny, Ireland

October 26
Garrett, Wyoming

November 2
Elko, Nevada

November 9
Reno, Nevada

November 16
Clifton Park, New York

December 7
Quapaw, Oklahoma

December 14
Roachdale, Indiana

December 21
Browns Valley, California

Follow Along At #FieldTripFriday

Matt Boyer is at Claremore Ag Education Center.
September 7 at 2:06 PM · Claremore, OK

What an awesome #fieldtripfriday from Dairy Carrie near Watertown, Wisconsin today. The presentation was filled with awesome dairy and agriculture advocacy information. Some of the highlights include that Spring flooding is somewhat common in Wisconsin but the current Fall flooding is not, all cows contain hormones naturally just like humans, no milk contains antibiotics (period), and agriculture must move from educating people to influencing people. I loved this explanation and reasoning. In conclusion, booger freezing cold truly exist in Wisconsin and “sorry, I had a cow licking my butt” can be said during a live presentation! I highly recommend you go follow her on social media. Next up for Field Trip Friday, we’ll be experiencing an almond harvest with Daren R. Williams in California on September 21!
**Alumni Spotlight**

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**KIRBY SMITH**

**FORMER ELK CITY FFA MEMBER**

**THEN**

FFA accomplishments and highlights:
- 2004 State FFA Officer Candidate
- Washington Leadership Conference Participant

Current job title: Field Representative for Congressman Frank D. Lucas

Length of time in your role: 3 years

Describe what your typical day looks like.
I travel throughout the 32 counties of Oklahoma's Third Congressional District building relationships, serving as a federal agency liaison and explaining policy. I speak on the Congressman's behalf and represent him in meetings. I strive to make the federal government more accessible.

Why is your career important to the ag industry?
The divide between rural and urban audiences continues to widen. I look for ways to champion agriculture in all areas of my life. I have the privilege of working for Oklahoma's most powerful ag spokesman. Representing his brand adds strength to my voice, and I try to use it to educate others and garner support for the agriculture industry.

What FFA events/CDEs would you suggest for students interested in your career?
Any and every event you can. I never won a plaque or ribbon, but with every CDE contest I participated in, I learned something new that I’ve used later.

Kirby welcomes questions from FFA members interested in agriculture policy. Contact Kirby via email at kirby.smith@mail.house.gov

**NOW**

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**BEN LASTLY**

**FORMER FREEDOM FFA MEMBER**

**THEN**

FFA accomplishments and highlights:
- 1996-1997 State FFA President
- 3rd in State Extemporaneous Speaking Contest
- Washington Leadership Conference Participant
- Oklahoma’s 1997 National Officer Candidate

Current job title: Georgia FFA Executive Secretary

Length of time in your role: 12 years

Describe what your typical day looks like.
One of the best parts of my job is that there is not a “typical” day. Depending on the time of year, I may be in the office planning events or handling finances of our association; or I may be traveling to schools; assisting with career development events or livestock shows; attending meetings across the state or traveling with State FFA Officers.

What do you like most about your current position?
In my opinion, serving as an FFA Executive Secretary is the greatest job in the world. There are so many parts of this job that I love. Having the opportunity to work with state FFA officers is great. I relish the opportunity to help these young people grow, be challenged and develop as leaders. I also very much enjoy being a resource for agriculture teachers. It is gratifying to help a teacher with a question or concern and then see the result of the success that they, their students and/or their chapter achieve.

Ben welcomes questions from FFA members considering a similar career path. Email Ben at blastly@gaaged.org.

**NOW**