

Dedicated to providing expanded educational and leadership opportunities for agricultural education programs across the state of Arizona



Executive Committee

Heather Rayner, President Estrella Region Representative, Member since 1999



Heather Rayner serves as the President of the Board of Trustees of the Arizona Agricultural Education/FFA Foundation. This is her fourth year as president where she has been a board member since 1999. She is the founding chair of the Blue and Gold Gala that began in 2016.

Other organizations that she serves on include serving as past book sale chair, past president and current president of VNSA, which holds the Southwest's largest used book sale in February for local charities; treasurer of the Agua Fria Foundation, a foundation that gives grants to teachers in the Agua Fria Unified High School District; and a lifetime member of Community of Christ. Heather is a partner in A Tumbling T Ranches, her husband's family farming business of more than 100 years in the Southwest Valley. She and Ron have one son, Ross who is also a partner in the family farm.



Farrah Smith, President Elect At Large, Member Since 2018

Farrah Smith is the owner of the Agraccountant LLC, where she helps farms and dairies uplevel their financial health and make better decisions about their businesses. An Arizona native, agriculture has been an essential part of her life for more than 30 years. She was elected to the Arizona Agricultural Education/FFA Foundation Board as an At-Large representative in 2018, where she has served as treasurer, Gala co-chair, and is currently serving as President Elect and chair of the Blue and Gold Gala. Farrah resides in Glendale with her husband and three daughters.





Doug Norton grew up in a farming family in Duncan, Arizona. Although he chose to become involved with Future Business Leaders of America, he was always envious of the blue jackets walking around campus and knew that FFA was a great organization. Growing up on the family farm solidified in Doug a desire to stay close to agriculture. After graduating from Arizona State University with a degree in Economics, he took a position with Farm Credit Services Southwest. Now called AgWest Farm Credit, Doug's agricultural banking career has spanned nearly 25 years where he has financed agriculture operations in every county in Arizona. Currently his role is branch manager of the Tempe office of AgWest. He finds serving on the Arizona FFA Foundation very rewarding and sees it as an opportunity to support the next generation of ag educators and producers.

Executive Committee





Richard McPherson has been an Agriscience instructor for the last 11 years in the Santa Cruz Valley School District #35, in Rio Rico, Arizona. Santa Cruz Valley is located near the southern border, and its population is primarily Hispanic. He attended Prescott High School in Arizona and graduated from the University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences with a master's degree in Agricultural Education. Richard believes in teaching and preparing students with skills for the world of work. His personal goal is to own his own pail-to-rail business in the Rio Rico area. His professional goal is to earn a PhD, in the next year. Richard believes that hard work can help you accomplish anything you want in life. His personal philosophy is that education and community service are the keys to developing a strong citizen and contributor to society.

Mike Olsen At Large, Member Since 2021



Mike Olsen is the President and Chairman of the Board for Olsen's Grain, Inc., and managing partner for Olsen/Sischka Investment Co. Mike is a 1975 graduate of University of Arizona Vocational Agriculture program and was an Agricultural Education Teacher from 1975-79. In 2022, Mike was named the Arizona FFA Agriculturalist of the year. Mike currently serves as secretary for Yavapai Cattle Growers, treasurer for the Cooper Ag Center booster club, and is a board member of the Arizona FFA Foundation. Mike is semi-retired, and enjoys team roping, snow skiing, flying, traveling and camping. He and his Sherrill have three adult children and two grandsons.

Executive Committee

Steve Goucher, Past President At Large, Member Since 2005



Steve graduated from University of Arizona in 1978 with a B.S. in Agricultural Economics. He has been with Farm Bureau Financial Services since 1995. Prior to joining Farm Bureau, he was in banking specializing in Commercial and Agricultural lending from 1979 to 1995. His family has been affiliated with the Arizona Farm Bureau and the insurance companies since 1973. Steven moved from Oklahoma to Arizona in 1965 at the age of 9. He is a licensed Arizona Insurance Agent since 1977, a Registered Representative since 1996, and a Financial Advisor since 2008. Steven is involved with the Arizona Agricultural Education/FFA Foundation, Alpha Pi of Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity, Maricopa County Farm Bureau, Maricopa County Fair Board, Peoria Chamber of Commerce, Agribusiness Council of Arizona, Farm Bureau Agent's Association, and NAIFA-ARIZONA, Treasurer. Steven and his wife Thelma enjoy travel and spending time with their families. They have three daughters and five granddaughters.

Scott Pilchard At Large, Member Since 2020



Scott Pilchard is the founder and principal of Western Skies Advisory, in Scottsdale. He provides financial guidance to farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural enterprises, focusing on ownership and management succession strategies, including the conservation of agricultural land. Out of the office, Scott is an alumnus of Project CENTRL (Class 29), served as an Honorary Commander of the 56th Comptroller's Squadron at Luke AFB, is the Business Representative of the Board of the Arizona Cattle Grower's Association, and serves thousands of BBQ meals each year at community events as part of the Arizona Farm Bureau's Grill Team. Scott currently serves on the Board of the Arizona Agricultural Education/FFA Foundation as an At-Large position, a member of the Executive Committee, and Co-Chair of the Donor Fund Committee. Scott is a past Clovis FFA member from California. He has been married for 37 years to his wife Allison, and they have four daughters and five grandchildren.

Steven Bales At Large, Member Since 2022



Steven is a native of Arizona and a native of Buckeye. His family has deep roots in our community, stretching all the way back to the late 1800's. He is the 6th generation to live and work on the ranch his great-great-grandparents homesteaded. FFA was a big part of his high-school years, serving many offices including chapter president in 1979. That was 20 years to the date from when his dad was chapter president. A graduate of Buckeye Union High School and the University of Arizona, Steven has been actively involved in issues that matter to the farming community, as well as in town endeavors. Across the years he has served on various boards & agencies including the Farm Bureau, the Arizona Cotton Growers Association, Farm Services Agency, and Chairman at West Valley National Bank. Steven is also a member and serving as Elder at Way of Grace Church along with Sunday school teaching for nearly 40 years. Steven and his wife Sidney were married in 1984 and have three children and four grandchildren.

Grant Boice At Large, Member Since 2018



Grant Boice is from a fourth generation Arizona pioneer ranching family and has known the Arizona livestock industry his entire life. Grant has been involved with the Arizona National Livestock Show for more than 50 years, serving as Chairman of the Calf Scramble Committee, Director, Secretary/Treasurer, President-Elect and President of the Show. In 1995 his roll switched from volunteer to employee when he was hired as the Executive Director of the Arizona National, a position he held for 18 years. Grant is Past President of the North American Livestock Show and Rodeo Managers' Association and Past President of the Arizona Fairs Association. He served on the Governor's Livestock and Agriculture Committee for 24 years and played an instrumental role ensuring continued and increased State funding for fairs and livestock shows. Although retired, Grant continues his involvement in livestock and agricultural organizations. He has served as the Business Manager for the Arizona Cattle Industry Research and Education Foundation for more than 30 years.



Tyler Bowen
Gila Southern Region, Member Since 2020

Tyler Bowen lives in Willcox, AZ where he grew up in agriculture and was a member of Willcox High School FFA Chapter. Tyler graduated from the University of Arizona in 2015 then moved to the Dakotas, working for Dow AgroSciences/Corteva for 4 years in their crop protection business. Given the opportunity with Corteva to move closer to home, Tyler was the specialty chemical representative for Corteva for several states in the southwest. In 2022 Tyler took a position with Azelis Agricultural & Environmental Solutions as the Range and Pasture Sales Manager. In his free time Tyler enjoys hunting, hiking, golfing, bike riding and spending time with family and friends.



Paul Bush At Large, Member Since 2022

Paul Bush is the President & CEO of Calcot Ltd., a 96 year-old cotton marketing cooperative with grower members in six states. Paul has a 25-year tenure with Calcot and worked previously in the cotton industry with Chickasha Cotton Oil Company and the King Ranch. He grew up near Wickenburg, Arizona, and is a 1989 graduate from the University of Arizona with a BS in Agricultural Economics. Paul remains active in UofA CALS alumni affairs and is a board member in several agricultural industry organizations. He and his wife, Nancy, live in the Cave Creek area, own horses and enjoy equine activities.





Brinton Colburn is a representative of Foothills Bank as their Agriculture Industry Specialist, focusing on commercial lending to farms and ranches throughout the state of Arizona. He attended Gilbert High School and then Arizona State University's W.P. Carey School of Business and the Morrison School of Agribusiness where he received a bachelor's degree in business administration. Brinton is a product of the College of Commercial Credit, a Loaned Executive for Valley of the Sun United Way program where he assisted in giving campaigns for Intel, US Airways, and other companies, and most recently an alumni of Project CENTRL's class 29. Brinton and his wife Allison have four kids. They love spending time outside in nature and can often be found on the road as they travel in their van with the family dog, Scout. When not on the road, they enjoy horseback riding, the orchestra, soccer, and rock climbing. They own Wylde Salon in Gilbert and have a great team that focuses on creating a positive, happy, supportive and inspired environment.





Jacque serves as the Chief Financial Officer at North Bowie Farming, LLC in Willcox, Bowie, and San Simon, Arizona since 2012. In addition to this role, Jacque was the owner/operator at Coronado Vineyards from November 2006 until March 2020. Prior to these endeavors, Jacque worked at Arizona Electric Power Cooperative as Director of Planning and Business Services. Jacque graduated from the University of Arizona in 1994 with a degree in Agricultural Economics and a minor in Agronomy. While at the UofA, Jacque met her husband Mark Cook, and they began row crop farming in Willcox in 1998. They have one daughter, Kennedy, who now attends New Mexico State University pursuing a degree in Agricultural Business.



Bryan Geiger grew up in Glendale, Arizona surrounded by agriculture and was active in 4-H and the Peoria FFA Chapter. He served as an Arizona Association FFA State Officer in 2001-2002. In 2006, Bryan became a certified Journeyman Electrician and married his wife, Sarah. He continued his career working for the family business, Geiger Electric. He later became a certified HVAC Technician and started Geiger Mechanical in 2014. In 2021, Bryan and Sarah purchased the family electrical business from Bryan's parents. Since Bryan's time as a State Officer, he has dedicated much of his spare time and resources to supporting the Arizona Association FFA. He has served on the Arizona FFA Foundation since 2015 and plans to continue supporting the organization in any way he can.

Gary McKenzie At Large, Member Since 2005

Gary McKenzie is the owner/operator of FARM INC./Financial and Risk Management, providing numerous risk management alternatives for agricultural producers. Gary grew up on a farm and ranch owned and operated by his father. After earning his BS Degrees in both Agricultural Education and Agricultural Economics, Gary was a High School Vocational Agriculture Teacher and FFA Advisor for three years. He then earned a Master of Science Degree in Agricultural Economics with a farm management emphasis while also working on a Multiple Peril Crop Insurance research project. Gary was an Agriculture Lender in Arizona from 1988 – 2001. Gary then worked for Farm Credit Services Southwest for seven years. In early 2002, Gary formed FARM INC. with his wife, Gayle joining him in 2004. Together they now serve clients in 12 states including two satellite offices in Nebraska and Texas. Gayle and Gary reside in Tempe where they raised their two children and maintain the FARM INC. company's headquarters.

Colin Mellon Yuma Region, Member Since 2020

Colin Mellon is a third generation Arizona farmer who has transitioned a small family farm into a thriving and innovative produce growing operation. Colin graduated from the University of Arizona in 1990 with a BS degree in Agricultural Economics. Colin manages the overall produce and rotational crops operation of Mellon Farms, balancing the needs of the clients, employees, land and equipment. In addition, Colin is an advocate for sustainable practices that maximize water usage and being a good steward of the land. Colin is involved in local and state organizations promoting the area's agriculture industry. He is an Honorary Member of the Junior Livestock Committee and Board Member of the Arizona FFA Foundation. Colin served as the Director of Farm Credit West November since 2015. Colin has taken on many leadership roles in the community to promote agriculture including the Yuma County Water Users' Association, Board of Directors of the Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association and appointed by the Arizona Governor to the Arizona Iceberg Lettuce Research Council.







Matthew Roeder At Large, Member Since 2023



Matthew moved to Phoenix in 1986 when his family relocated from the Denver area. Graduating high school in 1995 then attending college for a brief time, he has worked in the waterworks wholesale distribution industry for 27 years, the last 21 of those dedicated to Dana Kepner Company. His responsibilities as AMR/AMI Specialist are broad and include sales leadership, account development strategies. project management. public speaking. presentations. Matt prides himself on developing strong personal and professional relationships with customers, vendors, and the communities he serves, as well as being a contributing part of Dana Kepner's leadership team. He and his family were introduced to FFA in December 2016 by the Richland FFA and Stoutland FFA chapters of Missouri. Since then, his FFA support and participation has grown to attend multiple FFA galas, serving as a gala committee member and receiving his Honorary State Degree during the 2022 State Leadership Conference. Matt looks forward to growing his presence in Arizona FFA and expanding his knowledge of Arizona agriculture. At home, he enjoys spending time with his family, coaching his son's youth

Chris Udall San Tan Region, Member Since 2018

sports teams, doing CrossFit, and hunting wildlife in Arizona and Kansas.



Chris Udall joined the Agribusiness and Water Council of Arizona (ABWC) as Executive Director in the fall of 2004. Chris has seen the organization's influence and leadership role expand since 2004 to include the 'Water Management Certificate Program,' a program to assist in training the next generation of water managers, and the 'Vetting Forum 4 Water,' which facilitates the vetting of water legislation with legislators and stakeholders. Previous to his current position, Chris served as a Field Director and Congressional Liaison to two Arizona Congressmen for 10 years focusing on water, forest health, endangered species, local government outreach, transportation and Tribal relations. Chris is a 4th generation Arizona native with a long family history of involvement in public service, ranching and business. Chris is an Agricultural Economics/Agribusiness graduate of Brigham Young University.

Leigh Loughead Wilson At Large, Member Since 2019



Leigh has been involved in agriculture her entire life. Growing up her family boarded horses, raised cattle and registered Paint horses, had a flock of Hampshire sheep, and a herd of Crossbred and registered Hampshire swine. She showed dairy goats, market swine, market lambs and market steers through 4-H and FFA at the Arizona State Fair, Arizona National Livestock Show and the Maricopa County Fair.

Leigh graduated from Buckeye Union High School where she was very involved in the Buckeye FFA Chapter. She served as a Chapter Officer and after graduating from high school served as the 1986-1987 Arizona Association FFA State Secretary.

After graduation from the University of Arizona with a BS Degree in Agricultural Education, she went on to teach high school Agricultural Science for 23 years at Yuma High School where she served as the FFA Advisor for the Yuma FFA Chapter for all 23 years. She then taught Agriculture Science, Plant Science and Animal Science classes at Arizona Western College for six years while managing the 10-acre Land Lab until she retirement from education in 2020.

A few of the awards that Leigh has received over the years are: Honorary Chapter FFA Degree, Honorary State FFA Degree, Honorary American FFA Degree, Arizona State FFA Alumni Award, AATA Agricultural Science Teacher of the Year and the Inaugural Arizona Governor's Award for Post-Secondary Education.

Leigh has been working for Gowan Company - Gowan USA the past three years as a Global Buyer in the Supply Chain Procurement Department. Leigh is married to Todd Wilson and has a stepdaughter, Tiffany.

Ken Williams Superstition Region, Member Since 1986



Ken Williams has a great love and respect for the Arizona agriculture industry. He is a graduate from the first class of Agriculture Business at Arizona State University. He worked 18 years for Valley National Bank of Arizona, where his last job was manager of National Accounts and Correspondent Banks. Ken is a graduate from Rutgers Stonier Graduate School of Banking. Then he began his own wholesale plant production nurseries of color, poinsettias and foliage plants in Arizona and Texas, selling to the large retailers. Ken is extensively involved with the Arizona Nursery Association for many years. Ken was a President of the FFA at Phoenix Union High School and served as Arizona State FFA President in 1958-1959. He is an American Farmer Degree recipient. Ken is one of the founders of the Arizona Agricultural Education/FFA Foundation, serving as President in 2003-2006. He and his wife Judy have two children, five grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Ex-Officio



Tammie Zimmerman Arizona Agriculture Teachers Association Representative Member Since 2022

Tammie is a fourth generation Arizona native. She and her husband, Travis, have three children and live on a few acres in the west valley, where they raise horses and show cattle. Tammie has been a youth livestock show leader for over a decade and feels that the responsibility and character that is developed by giving our youth opportunities to work and care for livestock will have a lasting impact. Since 2015 Tammie has taught Agriscience at Trivium High School and has served as the Trivium FFA Advisor. Tammie and her family are involved in their church community and love to travel.

Bethany Matos

Arizona Association FFA Executive Secretary, Member Since 2016



Bethany Matos serves as the Executive Secretary for the Arizona Association FFA since 2016. Bethany has more than 20 years of experience with agricultural education and the FFA in a variety of roles. Upon graduating from high school in 2005, Bethany served as an Arizona FFA State Vice President from 2005-2006 and enrolled in the University of Arizona. Throughout college she worked for the Arizona FFA, the UofA Department of Agricultural Education, and served as the FFA Camp Director. She earned her BS in Agricultural Technology Management and Education in 2009 and her Masters in Agricultural Education in 2010. She taught agricultural education for six years at Mingus Union, Mayer and Chino Valley High Schools. In 2015, Bethany was named the ACTEAZ Outstanding New Member and Yavapai County Cross Grades Teacher of the Year. Bethany is an active member of the Association for Career and Technical Education, the National Association of Agricultural Educators, the Arizona Agriculture Teachers Association, Arizona Team Ag Ed and the National Association of Supervisors of Agricultural Education. She has served three terms as the National Secretary of NASAE and was named the Outstanding New Member in 2020. Bethany lives in Buckeye with her husband Jarrell and their three daughters.

Raney Embree

FFA Alumni Representative, Member Since 2020



Raney is a Yuma native and was an active FFA member at Cibola High school and served as an Arizona State FFA Officer 1999-2000. Raney reactivated her local alumni and has had a very successful chapter (Yuma Territorial FFA Alumni) for almost 20 years now, which has led to the opportunity to revitalize the Arizona Association FFA Alumni. Raney serves on the Arizona FFA Foundation as the Alumni Representative and has enjoyed learning about all the workings of the Foundation. Raney worked for the National FFA as a Career Development Assistant for five years. Raney is a 22-year veteran of the USDA Farm Service Agency assisting the farmers of Yuma and La Paz County. Raney is a very proud Project CENTRL graduate. Raney and her husband have 4 children, one of which is a current FFA member.

Ex-Officio



Bruce Watkins

State Supervisor of Agriculture Education, Member Since 2012

Bruce was an Agriculture Teacher and Department Head in the Mesa Public Schools for 28 years. He also served on the National FFA Foundation Board in Indianapolis. He currently works for the Arizona Department of Education. Bruce works with agriculture teachers on professional development, teacher and student certifications, program grants, and quality and compliance monitoring. Bruce has four children and seven grandchildren. He is an active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of latter-day Saints.

Dr. Robert Torres

University of Arizona College of Agriculture, Department of Agricultural Education, Technology & Innovation, Member Since 2011



Dr. Robert 'Bobby' Torres was born and raised on a sheep and cattle ranch in northern New Mexico and, as a youth, was extensively involved in 4-H and FFA. As a first-generation college student, he graduated from New Mexico State University with bachelor's and master's degrees in Agricultural and Extension Education. Early in his career, Bobby taught school-based agricultural education in Willcox, Arizona. He later obtained his PhD in Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University to become a teacher-educator, researcher, and administrator. He continues to be involved in production agriculture as a soybean, corn, and alfalfa grower. He is currently a Professor of Agricultural Education, Technology & Innovation and holds the Neely Family Endowed Professorship in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University of Arizona. Before accepting his current faculty and administrative role, Bobby spent eight years at the University of Missouri and nine years at NMSU. In addition to his current administrative duties, Bobby serves as a student advisor, faculty mentor, and he teaches undergraduate and graduate courses. He has received numerous campus, state, and national teaching awards and recognitions, including the prestigious USDA Excellence in College and University Teaching Award, as a testament to his love for teaching. He has received the Outstanding Alumni Award from both of his alma maters. With more than 120 refereed publications, Dr. Torres conducts research in teaching and learning within agricultural education. Bobby has been a Consultant to the National FFA Organization Board of Directors and the National FFA Board of Trustees. He recently was honored with the VIP Citation Award from the National FFA Organization. He serves on the Arizona Career and Technical Education Quality Skills Commission and became *an Arizona Agricultural Education/FFA Foundation Board member in *LIST YEARS**. Dr. Torres is the past President of the American Association for Agricultural Education and serves on the Association for Career and Technical Education Board of Directors. Bobby and his wife, Sara, have four children.

Consultant to the Board & Staff



Ashley Norvell Arizona Association FFA 2023-2024 State President

Ashley Norvell is the 2023-2024 Arizona FFA Association State President. She was born and raised in the rural areas of Arizona. She was a member of the Chino Valley FFA Chapter. Growing up very close to the agricultural industry, she developed true love and passion for everything in the agricultural world. The FFA has allowed her to put this passion to use over the past several years. Ashley is pleased she will get to serve this amazing organization in her position for this upcoming year.





Rochell is originally from Casper, Wyoming but grew up most of her life in Glendale, Arizona. She was very active in 4H and during high school transitioned her involvement to FFA. She is a graduate of Deer Valley High School where she was actively involved in the FFA Chapter serving in many leadership positions. Rochell performed in the National FFA Talent Program in 1986. She served as the State FFA Vice President/Black Canyon District President in 1988-1989. While serving as a State Officer she attended Scottsdale Community College for the Equine Program and Glendale Community College. Following State Office, she transferred to Texas Tech University where she focused on Agriculture Communications. She received her American FFA Degree in 1989 from National FFA and later awarded her Honorary State Degree from the Arizona Association FFA. In the early 90's she served as the Arizona FFA Alumni President for several years and was honored to have received a State Membership award through the National FFA Alumni during her time as President. She worked with non-profits in the agriculture industry throughout her career. In 2003 she opened Rockin R Meetings & Events. Rochell has worked in the agriculture industry for more than 30 years. She has been recognized in the hospitality industry with several accolades and profiled in the Arizona Business Magazine in 2003 & 2007. She is a graduate of Project CENTRL Class XIII. Rochell was honored to serve the Foundation as a client in 2017 and then transitioned to the position of Executive Director in 2018. She and her husband Jay reside in Peoria.

Staff





Meagan grew up in Buckeye, where she was an active member of the FFA chapter and basketball team during high school. She enjoyed showing sheep at the county fair in her younger years. Meagan comes from a 4th generation dairy farm family. Agriculture is part of who she is, and she is very passionate about promoting the industry. She attended Glendale Community College where she played for the women's basketball team. She is a graduate of Arizona State University with a bachelor's degree in Global Business, emphasis in Marketing. Meagan has a background in marketing, event coordination and fundraising. She has four sons and they are very active in their 4H groups and school activities. They enjoy traveling, hunting and spending quality time with their family. Meagan is an avid supporter of FFA and the skills youth may develop through the organization.

Shelby Naber Event Coordinator, Since 2023



Shelby is a Phoenix native who recently graduated from Grand Canyon University with a degree in Hospitality Management and a certificate in Meeting and Event Management. Throughout her collegiate career, she was a part of both NJCAA and NCVF national championship volleyball teams. Along with coaching for Arizona Sky Volleyball Academy, she has also enjoyed planning events for them, focused on celebrating young female athletes. Shelby fully supports the mission of Arizona Agricultural Education/FFA Foundation, and she is excited to serve in her new role with the Foundation.