

# SANTA MARIA FFA

## “Unidos”

2023-2024 Newsletter  
Volume 1 Issue 2

### OFFICER TEAM MESSAGE

Santa Maria FFA hopes that each and every one of you had a restful and peaceful winter break. As we enter the second semester, we are excited to show you what is in store and begin planning upcoming events for all of our students to enjoy. We cannot wait to see all of you getting involved in this semester's events! Go saints!



Pictured left to right: Karen Martinez (Reporter), Emily Guzman (Secretary), Vanessa Nunez (Vice President), Melissa Lua (President), Jhoana Hernandez (Vice President), Jessica Avendano (Treasurer), Kayce Van Horn (Reporter), Perla Delgado (Sentinel).



### COMMUNITY SERVICE

By: Clara Trenado

These past couple of months we had many of our amazing members volunteer in our community service events, such as Altrusa of the Central Coast, Altrusa Golden Valley Christmas Tree Fundraisers, The Patch of Santa Maria, Haunted Hills, Open Streets, and many more events. We had around 150 students volunteer and received amazing feedback from our community members who were volunteering and running those events.



Carlos Escobedo From the City of Santa Maria mentioned " I love when FFA helps in our community, I can't wait for next year's Open Streets and Altrusa events!"

Every year we gain experiences, create memories, and connections through these events. It's amazing how we can come together every year and create an impact on our community in any way possible. We can't wait for what comes next and what opportunities we have to look forward to.

### GREENHAND LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

By: Emma Rodriguez

Our first year Santa Maria FFA members, Greenhands, had the opportunity to attend two Greenhand Leadership Conferences (GLC) in the fall. At these conferences, first year members are able to see what the FFA organization has to offer and ways to get involved.

On September 15th, Santa Maria FFA held our 2nd annual chapter GLC. At this conference, we divided the 200+ attendees into 5 groups, one of which was a Spanish only speaking group, and sent them off to our six different stations, which include floral, mechanics, FFA jacket fitting, Ornamental Horticultural, livestock, and an alumni panel. Along with receiving handouts at the different stations, if the first year members RSVP via QR code they were able to receive a free Greenhand T-shirt.



Anahi Nuñez, "Attending the GLC in Paso Robles and Chapter conference taught me new things, it inspired me to get more involved in the FFA, and it was a great way to meet and make new friends."

On October 18th, we had 16 of our first year members attend the regional GLC in Paso Robles. We also had our former chapter president, Carlos Nuñez, be a facilitator at the conference. Our greenhands went through a series of activities that encouraged their involvement in FFA.

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

By: Gabriela Cabrera

On September 27, Santa Maria FFA hosted our Fiesta Meeting celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month. Starting with our Annual Salsa Competition, this year we had almost 100 salsa entries from our FFA members, with the best red, green, guacamole, and spiciest salsa. Members had the opportunity to participate in games, such as loteria and a taco-eating competition! Lastly, everyone went outside to break open a piñata and enjoy tacos!



In October, Santa Maria FFA created a fall festival for our members. Members had the opportunity to participate in a mummy wrapping contest and a costume contest. Outside Ethel Pope, the chapter set up a variety of stations including pumpkin carving, face painting, hayrides around campus, pumpkin launch, and pieing the officers. “I’ve never seen a pumpkin launch done before,” said Gregory Martinez.

November was our chapters chance to Initiate our first-year members called Greenhands. To start the day, these members could dye their hand green and receive a donut and hot cocoa. After school Greenhand members were tasked with a series of challenges to be initiated. These challenges include introducing themselves to their peers, putting their hand in two mystery boxes, and then fishing for their Greenhand pin.



This past December Santa Maria, Righetti, and Pioneer Valley High School hosted our annual Joint Christmas Meeting at the CTE Center. Students worked together to compete against the other schools in a variety of games. One of the games included the president from each school to compete in a relay race involving gift wrapping, and a cookie eating competition. We thank all the chapters and students who participated. We hope to see all chapters again next year!

## AGRI-NOTICIAS

By: Juridia Rojas

Our FFA chapter established a new way of communicating and informing Spanish speakers to be aware of all FFA events and improve their knowledge about the FFA organization. Our officers and committee chairs create an uplifting and comfortable environment.

To be inclusive for them and provide them with knowledge and experiences.

We plan hands on activities for students to get a sneak peek of the next meeting, while being provided with snacks and games. In our October meeting they had the chance to paint pumpkins and make tissue flowers. We had more than 70 participants and it has only been expanding.



“Danna Paola Gutierrez Says “Lleendo a las juntas de agrinoticas son hechos en maneras divertidas para todavia aprender mientras estar entrenados. Igual nos ayuda entender de lo que vas se la proxima junta. Estoy agradecida que todavia intentan apesar de la diferencia en le lenguaje.”

## BLOOMING WITH EXCELLENCE

By: Vanessa Nunez

This year’s Floral Design program at Santa Maria FFA is a success! Students earn real experiences in the floral industry producing various types of arrangements for different events.

As normal, we have continued to host a monthly flower arrangement subscription in which 150 to 180 arrangements are made by our very own students in 6 classes which helps them feel empowered to use their creativity in new ways.

With the current success in student’s floriculture abilities, one of our teachers pursued a collaboration with a local rose farm, Eufhoria, helping engage students in new designs and techniques in floral arranging. In the month of November, around 180 spiral rose bouquets were made by our students, using Eufhoria’s wide variety of roses to showcase the sustainably grown roses. This collaboration has allowed our students’ work to be purchased at flower markets in southern California. The Santa Maria FFA Floral Shop is ready to carry on with our hard work and continue blooming this spring. We are currently planning for Valentine’s Day sales, and will continue with the Flower of the Month arrangements, mother’s day arrangements, and other events!



Advanced Floral student, Daniela Sierra, mentions she has “developed skills outside of school and feels more confident in making arrangements for my own family and friends.”

## CHAPTER OFFICER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

By: Kaeyla Pacheco



On October 7-8, Santa Maria High School had the privilege of serving as the host for the annual two-day Chapter Officer Leadership Conference (COLC). Over forty FFA chapters from the South Coast Region were welcomed. In addition to participating in leadership development workshops facilitated by the California State and Regional FFA Officers, attendees had the opportunity to hear from a range of speakers.

Through the sessions and activities, the leaders in attendance gained knowledge on how to be influential members in their communities, chapters, and positive role models. Twelve FFA students from Santa Maria High School attended the conference, while numerous additional members assisted with planning, coordinating, and cleanup afterward. Chapters took part in a lip-sync competition with the theme "Through the Decades" at the conclusion of the first conference night in the auditorium. In the end, the students enjoyed the life lessons they learned at COLC, creating friendships, memories, and loving Santa Maria High School.

Santa Maria High School's Principal Mr. Steve Campbell mentioned, "It was a great experience seeing all the students from different chapters and towns come together and I hope that we can host it again for years in the future."

## OPENING AND CLOSING COMPETITION

By: Melissa Ramirez



"It is a fantastic opportunity to start public speaking as someone who was shy, Opening and closing was a wonderful way to increase my confidence when it came to public speaking." stated Diana Nicolas

On October 14, 2023, our Saints competed in Opening and Closing at Pioneer Valley High School along with other local FFA chapters. Opening and Closing is a competition that consists of 6 members. Each member is responsible for memorizing their part word for word and reciting it aloud.

We had 20 teams competing at the Sectional level. Congratulations to Perla Delgado for being the outstanding Sentinel and Jhoana Hernandez for earning outstanding Vice President in the officer division.

## NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION

By: Kayce Van Horn

The Santa Maria FFA recently sent ten FFA Members to the 96th National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The Santa Maria FFA State Champion Poultry Judging Team represented California and competed in the National Contest, ranked gold, and placed 8th out of 43 teams.

Other FFA Members attending the conference included members from the State Champion Vegetable Judging and Fruit Tree Pruning Teams. They participated in leadership activities and in the National Day of Service at the St. Vincent Distribution Center where they collectively completed over 25 hours of community service.

We also had Emily Guzman attend as a National Delegate as one of the 43 members representing California.

"Serving as a delegate was an absolute honor and I will forever be grateful for it because of all the amazing, dedicated people I have met." - Emily Guzman, National Delegate



## B.I.G. AND WATER ISSUES

By: Melissa Ramirez

"B.I.G. was a great start to my freshman year in FFA, I got to meet new people, but I also got the knowledge about FFA, overall, I enjoyed the experience I had with my B.I.G team." said Jessica Alvarez (Freshman).



On November 14, 2023 the Sectional Best Informed Greenhand(B.I.G) Contest and Water Issues contest was held at Nipomo High School. The B.I.G contest is a written test for 9th grade students to test their knowledge about FFA history, officers, constitution, and bylaws. We had 18 students compete. One of our teams placed 5th. We are so excited to see what this group of individuals will accomplish this academic year.

The Water Issue contest is a test with 50 questions, that tests members about droughts, dams, usage of water such as the usage in agriculture, drinking water and the usage of water of a daily basis, and water projects around the state of California. Our Water Issues teams place 4th at the sectional level The team has learned the importance of water through this competition.

## MADE FOR EXCELLENCE /

By: Cristina Sanchez

## ADVANCED LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

As we start this new year, 33 individuals from our chapter attended the Made for Excellence & Advanced Leadership Academy Conferences. This was being held in Monterey, CA on January 28-29th, 2024. This has been an incredible opportunity for our members to be inspired, enhance new valuable skills, and grow into well-rounded individuals.

The Made for Excellence Conference is intended for second year members, they got a chance to participate in leadership workshops planned by the FFA State Officers. Participating in these hands-on sessions Santa Maria FFA members learned new abilities and discovered their potential as leaders!

Furthermore, the Advanced Leadership Academy conference is for third year or fourth year members. These individuals developed their leadership skills and learned essential skills such as teamwork, communication, critical thinking, and problem solving. They were also inspired to dream big and to continue pursuing their goals and to make a difference in their communities.



MFE attendee, Aaron Richard's said, "I learned that leadership is not all about yourself on the outside it is about yourself on the inside and about the way you take care of people emotionally and physically. I had a lot of fun during the conference by making new friends and learning new things about my self and others."



## NATIONAL CHAPTER APPLICATION

By: Melissa Ramirez

Our leadership class has been working on the National Chapter Application. This application is to recognize FFA chapters that actively implement the mission and strategies of the organization and improve chapter operations using the National Quality Chapter Standards (NQCS) and a Program of Activities (POA) that emphasize growing leaders, building communities and strengthening agriculture.

Our class was divided into three different committees each with a committee chair. In total our leadership class came up with 27 different goals for 9 different activities.

During winter break, our Officer team met up and spent over 2 days revising that everything was perfect to submit the National Chapter Application.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sectional Public Speaking Competition 2/7/24
- National FFA Week 2/18/24 - 2/23/24
- Regional Spring Meeting 3/8/24
- State Conference 3/21/24 - 3/24/24

## UPCOMING FIELD DAYS

- Arbuckle 2/3/24
- Chico 2/10/24
- Allan Hancock 2/17/24
- UC Davis 3/2/24
- Le Grand 3/2/24
- Merced 3/9/24
- Dinuba 3/9/24
- Modesto 3/16/24
- Fresno 4/20/24
- Cal Poly State Finals 5/4/24