



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

## Senator Montgomery brings Future Farmers of America to Red Hook

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY January 23, 2020

| ISSUE: **FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA, AGRICULTURE, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, BUILDING THE FARM TO SCHOOL PIPELINE, EDUCATION**

| COMMITTEE: **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**



Senator Montgomery welcomed young members of Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga (TST) New Visions Future Farmers of America (FFA) program to PS15 and PS 676 in Red Hook, Brooklyn. High school seniors traveled from Ithaca to Brooklyn to share “The Maple Experience,” an interactive display housed in a 24-foot long trailer, which depicts all facets of the maple industry.

New York is the second largest maple syrup producing state in the country, producing over 800,000 gallons last year. Red Hook students were offered a first-hand look at how the sap is harvested and collected from maple trees, and then processed into pure, sweet maple syrup. The presentation concluded with samples and examples of how to use maple syrup in foods.

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*I absolutely love programs like this because it connects young people from such different backgrounds and regions within New York State. Last session we were able to provide funding to the FFA and Maple Experience Mobile Museum,” said State Senator Velmanette Montgomery. “*

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*As a member of the Senate Agriculture committee, I feel it is important for our children to be more connected to where their food comes from, whether it be upstate or a local community garden. These young people are the future leaders who will work on solving issues relating to food insecurity and a changing agriculture industry.”*

Future Farmers of America (FFA) is a premier life sciences program that promotes leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education and participation in projects like the Maple Experience Mobile Museum. Members are future chemists, veterinarians, government officials, entrepreneurs, bankers, international business leaders, teachers and premier professionals in many career fields including the agriculture industry. Annually, the FFA participates in the Farm Bureau’s Agriculture Day where they bring agricultural products from all over the state are introduced to legislators to make them aware of the thousands of products made in New York.

There is only one active FFA chapter in New York City, located at John Bowne High School in Queens and it is the largest in the state. Senator Montgomery continues to work with FFA and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets in the hopes of creating more FFA chapters downstate.

There are several grant opportunities offered by the state for teachers and administrators interested in starting or expanding K-12 Agriculture Education programs in their schools such as the:

Agricultural Literacy Grant: To support any curricular-related activity a teacher is interested in pursuing to include, but not limited to: chickens in the courtyard, field trips, purchasing food to cook in the classroom, school garden creation or expansion, and more! This is a rolling application grant, and will open again in Spring 2020.

The agricultural education outreach programs at Cornell University have created a guide for teachers interested in applying for funding. They have made many supportive resources available at [www.nysffa.org/start-a-program](http://www.nysffa.org/start-a-program)