

NEWS & VIEWS

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NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS, INC.

WWW.NAAE.ORG

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NAAE Convention
2007
Invest in Your Future
December 11-15, 2007



Join the Community!

NAAE Launches Revamped Communities of Practice

The newly revamped NAAE Communities of Practice is now open!

The new Communities features discussion forums where teachers can ask questions and get answers, lots of resources available for download, and continually updated information.

The site is structured around agricultural education topics, each of which is facilitated by a volunteer who has an interest in that area. That facilitator makes sure each area is constantly up-to-date and that discussion forums are running smoothly.

The updated interface will allow community members to post and collaborate on documents, create a profile and view other members profiles, author their own blogs, embed video and pictures and much more.



ASK

Want to know if you should charge lab fees? Need plans for a grill? Looking for advice on keeping your extended days safe? Post a question on our discussion forums and get answers from real agricultural educators who have been where you are. We have volunteers who are just waiting for your questions.

DISCUSS

Communities is the only place where ag educators from all over the United States can get together every day and talk about issues that are affecting them. NAAE will be collaborating with many ag education partners to add must-see content and create a way for everyone to participate in the discussion. For instance, FFA Advisors should look for articles in their Making A Difference Newsletter that spark discussion and direct people back to NAAE's Communities to talk.

COLLABORATE

Post documents on Communities of Practice and allow other members to edit, add and update. Colleagues on opposite ends of the country could easily work together to prepare a presentation without ever leaving their classrooms. Find resources added by other agricultural educators and share your own.

Join the community! It's new, it's free, and it's just for you. Check it out at www.naae.org/membership/commofpractice.

President's Message

A Time to Reflect



*Lee James, Mississippi
2006-07
NAAE President*

With fall in the air and busy schedules taking much of our time, I have to stop and reflect on my experiences over the past few years. It has been a time that I will cherish for the rest of my life. Little did I know in 1999 what was in store for me over the next few years! I have had the distinct honor of serving Region V as alternate vice president and vice president, and have served this fantastic organization as your president-elect and president.

As I think about what has transpired during my years of service, there are many things that I will value from my experiences. One is the opportunity to meet and develop friendships all over the nation. I have heard that true dedication can be measured by actions of individuals. I don't know of any more dedicated individuals than agriculture educators. You have shown your dedication time and time again by your commitment to your students and the National Association of Agriculture Educators. I wish I could personally thank each ag teacher for his or her dedication and service.

I have had the opportunity to work with some fantastic individuals on the NAAE board of directors. I have developed an extended family with these people that will last a lifetime. I saw professionalism in action by being part of this team. Few realize the number of hours these individuals put into their work as a board and STILL maintain outstanding programs back home.

Then we have the staff at the NAAE office; these folks are simply fantastic. Not only do they do their jobs with dedication, they do it with enthusiasm. I can never adequately thank the staff for their hard work and support over the years. Any successful organization is only as good as the people that handle the day to day challenges; NAAE has the best.

I can never thank Region V enough for their continued support and encouragement during my terms of office. I could list names of individuals but it would be a very long list.

We have many more challenges before us in agricultural education; the 10 X 15 initiative is on the front burner. We must continue to recruit and retain agriculture educators. We owe it to students across the nation and to the agriculture industry. A few people can't do it; we all will have to work together to see

success. We must continue our advocacy efforts on a daily basis at home as well as on the state and national levels. Let these people know about the great programs you have and how it is impacting the students you serve.

I had the good fortune as a ninth grader to know what "I wanted to be when I grew up." This was because of a high school agriculture teacher who developed in me a love for agriculture and a desire to impact students in the same way. After 31 years in the classroom and labs, I hope I have made the same difference in students as my ag teacher did in me. If you love what you are doing you can't call it a job, so I guess I can say it has been an adventure. I am in awe when I think about being in the classroom one day and the next day driving across the hills of Minnesota watching crops being harvested. I am thankful for the opportunities I have had with this organization, and it is my hope that I have given back to the organization which has given so much to me. If someone asked me if I had the chance to do it all over again I would definitely say "you dang skippy."

TODAY'S LESSON:

Discovering a FREE tool to help you teach students about the variety of careers in agriculture

YOUR ASSIGNMENT:

1. Log onto www.agcareers.com
2. Check out actual career opportunities your students can acquire in agriculture
3. Help students recognize the variety of agricultural companies that are seeking them as future employees
4. Encourage students to evaluate employment requirements and gauge salary expectations

HOMEWORK:

Start using AgCareers.com in the classroom today!

AG
Careers.com



From NAAE

Make a Clean Sweep



*Alissa F. Smith
NAAE Associate
Executive Director*

As you make it back from National FFA Convention with your students in tow and your bags chock full of pamphlets, freebies, and catalogs, consider a new approach to storing all of that “stuff.” Instead of just throwing your bag in the corner of your office or classroom until you need it (or forget you even had it), you may want to think about spending some time evaluating your new found treasures. Yes, I said treasures! You picked it up for a reason; maybe you thought it would be a great resource for your classroom, or you thought your co-teacher may be able to use the information, or maybe it is something you would like to think about integrating down the line. Whatever the reason, leaving it stuffed into a bag may not be the best use for it.

Take the time this year to sort through some of that stuff you thought you needed so badly. A good way to get yourself on track is to do some quick organization. If you have ever watched the TV show “Clean Sweep” on TLC, you will recognize my tips to quickly organize your classroom. On this show, homeowners bring in a team of trained professionals to organize their lives. Their houses are packed to the brim with things they don’t need anymore but don’t want to part with. Does that sound like your classroom? Ag teachers are notorious for squirreling away any resource they can for their classrooms. But sometimes having all that stuff actually hinders your progress, just like the people on the show. If you are guilty as charged, I challenge you to find a new method to your madness.

MAKING YOUR CLEAN SWEEP

On “Clean Sweep,” trained professionals force the homeowners to make difficult choices to get their lives and homes back into functioning order. They spend days removing all the items from their home (or at least rooms within the house). The homeowners must put the items into one of three piles. One pile is for items they would like to keep, another pile is for items they would like to sell, and last pile is for items they would like to toss.

This method is easily adapted for your classroom. Your piles will be keep, share and toss. The keep pile is for items you think will be useful within the next two years. The share pile is for items

that you may not need but will help another teacher in your department or area. Of course the toss pile is for items that are outdated and/or you won’t use. If you’re having trouble letting go of things because you’re afraid you might need them one day, use this rule of thumb. If you’ve had the item for two years or more and haven’t used it, or don’t have a specific plan for it (like a new class next year) you probably won’t.

Once you get all of your items in those three piles, you are halfway there. Dig up two file folders and label one Resources-Keep and another Resources-Share. Then quickly, before you change your mind, dump the other pile in the nearest trash can. Depending on your relationship with these items, you may need to take a few moments to say goodbye, but the main thing is that you say good riddance. Find a home for your share resources right away, and file your keep resources.

You may find that this was so easy that you could do this with all of your classroom items. Just don’t forget to contribute to your share pile, because as you know, your trash may be another person’s treasure! Good luck with your Clean Sweep!



Agricultural Education Online Curriculum

Online Instructional Materials for the Future

IML introduces its new online curriculum for agricultural education, including:

- Lesson plans
- Student reference
- Online assessments and grading, as well as printable assessments
- PowerPoint slides and image libraries
- Unit assessments and activities
- Downloadable files
- Password-protected access

New features are being added regularly.



For a free trial offer, call (800) 669-2465, e-mail iml@missouri.edu, or visit IML's agricultural education Web site at <http://www.iml-ag.missouri.edu>. IML looks forward to bringing you the next generation of instructional materials.

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THE NEW COMMERCIAL STANDARD



GRAB LIFE



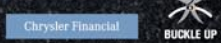
DODGE



INSTEAD OF AN APPLE, TEACHERS NOW GET A \$500 FFA BONUS ON ANY NEW DODGE TRUCK.

Dodge has been a proud sponsor of the FFA for over half a century. And we're now offering FFA member families, active alumni members, and NAAE teachers an extra \$500 cash allowance on any new Dodge truck.* Contact your local Dodge dealer to take advantage of this limited-time offer on the Dodge truck of your choice — like the hardworking Ram Heavy Duty with the available legendary 6.7L Cummins® Turbo Diesel, part of the longest-lasting,† most durable‡ line of full-size pickups. For more info, visit dodge.com or call 800-4ADODGE.

*Offer good 5/1/07–1/2/08 on '07 MY (8/1/07 – 1/2/08 on '08 MY) Dodge Ram 1500, 2500, 3500, Ram Chassis Cab, Magnum, Caravan, Grand Caravan, Dakota, Durango and Nitro. Excludes SRT models. See your dealer for details. †Based on R.L. Polk & Co. Vehicles in Operation registration statistics 1987–2006. ‡Durability based on longevity. Properly secure all cargo. Chrysler Financial is a business unit of Chrysler Financial Services. Cummins is a registered trademark of Cummins, Inc.



WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND THE 2007 NAAE CONVENTION?

December 11-15, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas



- Over 50 professional development workshops specifically designed for agricultural educators
- Network with more than 500 agricultural educators from across the United States
- Share your ideas for ag education at regional and committee meetings
- Get great ideas for your program and FFA chapter from award winners
- Try out the newest products to use in your classroom at the Organizational Members & Business Partners' Reception
- Collect great resources for products, fundraisers, and instructional materials
- Interact with your peers and work to strengthen agricultural education

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!
REGISTER & MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS
TODAY AT [NAAE.ORG](http://NAAE.org)



NAAE Convention
2007
Investing in the Future



Specialized SAE Record Book Designed for Non-Traditional Projects



*Nina Crutchfield
2006 Ideas Unlimited Winner
Region II*

Nina Crutchfield, a former agricultural science instructor at Searcy High School in Searcy, Arkansas, needed a record book that could help her students track their unique projects.

Searcy High School is located in a primarily urban

setting with little access to traditional agriculture. To provide her students with a comprehensive agriculture program, Crutchfield focused on three areas; classroom instruction, Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE), and the National FFA Organization. A SAE allows students to gain hands-on experience and develop skills in agricultural career areas that interest him or her in a supervised setting. A SAE project also requires students to keep thorough records of expenses, revenues, work hours, and assets.

Because of its primarily urban setting, many of Searcy High's ag students had non-traditional SAE's. "(This book) can be used for the non-traditional students, in situations where students may come and go through the program, and for students who wish to explore various facets of agricultural

education until they decide where to focus their interests and efforts," said Crutchfield. "My students were primarily urban/suburban students and I had to find a way to engage all of them with SAE's."

Within the new record book Crutchfield developed an extensive list of project ideas and included a supervisory page, which allows her or the student's supervisor to evaluate the student's performance. For a PDF download of Crutchfield's record book, visit www.naae.org/links/resources#recordbook.

The Ideas Unlimited award program, sponsored by Delmar Cengage Learning, recognizes active NAAE members for developing and sharing their innovative ideas. For more information about this and other awards programs, visit www.naae.org.

[Download the record book
at naae.org](http://www.naae.org)



NEW Vernier LabQuest

Vernier announces the breakthrough data-collection technology solution for science education—Vernier LabQuest.

- Color touch screen
- Use as a computer interface with Logger Pro software or as a stand-alone laboratory interface
- Built-in data collection and analysis software
- Use with Soil Moisture, Temperature, and pH sensors

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NAAE Member Selected as Educational Ambassador to Galapagos Islands



Joe Green, NAAE member and horticulture instructor at Pope High School in Marietta, Georgia, was selected as one of only 24 teachers nationwide to participate in Toyota's

International Teacher Program as an educational ambassador to the Galapagos Islands this October.

Teachers visited prominent sites on the islands of Santa Cruz and San Cristobal. They observed environmental projects, talked with experts and community leaders, and participated in activities that encourage global awareness about environmental conservation.

Teacher Mentor



*Shelly Roy
Ledyard High School
2006 Teacher Mentor
Region VI*

Shelly Roy, an agricultural science teacher at Ledyard High School in Ledyard, Connecticut, received the 2006 Region VI NAAE Teacher Mentor Award.

For the past 29 years, Roy has taught natural resources, aquaculture, animal sciences, agriculture mechanics and plant sciences. She also serves as the department head of Ledyard's agri-science and technology program. Roy was nominated by her co-teacher Matthew Smith, whom she has mentored for the past four years.

To help Smith grow as an educator, Roy has introduced him to many different ways to teach and get in touch with his students. To build resources, she has also encouraged him to get involved with various professional organizations as well as the local community.

"She has taught me to be an active teacher and has shown me how to make students active learners. Her assistance, encouragement and supportive suggestions have advanced my teaching career further than I thought possible in the time I have been an educator," said Smith.

The NAAE is proud to honor those individuals who have given of themselves to perpetuate their experiences to younger teachers," commented NAAE past president Allan Sulser. "There is no better teacher than experience."

The Teacher Mentor award is sponsored by CEV Multimedia. For more information about this and other NAAE awards programs, visit www.naae.org.



Outstanding Middle/Secondary School Program

*Janesville Craig High School, Janesville, WI
2006 Outstanding Middle/Secondary School Program Award Winner
Region III*

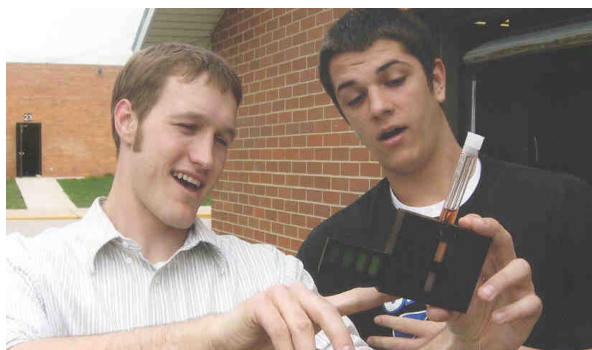
Diane Runde and Rick Henningfeld serve as instructors for the agriculture program at Janesville Craig High School in Janesville, Wisconsin. Their program was selected as the 2006 Region III Outstanding Middle/Secondary School Program award winner.

A decade ago, Runde revived an agriculture program that had been defunct for sixteen years. Since then the department has had to add another teacher, enrollment in classes and FFA membership are at an all-time high, and the Janesville Craig agriculture program has been selected as the Outstanding Agriculture Program in Wisconsin.

Janesville Craig's agricultural classes have changed with the times, gearing toward non-production agriculture to hold students' interest. A few years ago, the instructors began to realize that many students were graduating without the necessary skills to be immediately employable. To solve this, the agriculture department started a Leadership in the Workplace class designed so that all students who wanted to

enter the workforce after high school could.

To keep their program a success, the Janesville Craig agricultural department continuously markets itself to the public. In 2004, the program worked with The Janesville Gazette to develop an insert that included information and stories from five other county agriculture programs. The article was distributed to over 50,000 subscribers and was a true showcase of agricultural education.



Rick Henningfeld discusses test results with a student

"We have found being visible in both the school and community has helped build support for our program," said Runde.

The Outstanding Middle/Secondary Agricultural Education Program Award highlights the local programs and teachers that achieve success. The Janesville Craig High School program was the

2006 Region III winner. This award is sponsored by Case IH. For more information about this and other NAAE awards, please visit www.naae.org.



Regional Update

Region I



Kevin Fochs, Region I VP
Email: kfochs@livingston.k12.mt.us

Well it's crunch time for many of you. Not too far down the road you will be traveling to the NAAE convention in Las Vegas. Get those travel arrangements made and plan to spend a few days with us at the Riveria on December 11-15. Investing in the Future is the theme, and on the lighter side I hope you get to Vegas and back with enough cash to make that a reality.

We will be electing new leadership for Region I, we need members to run for both regional vice president and regional secretary. Please think of advancing your involvement in NAAE and helping lead your organization.

Those of you with assignments to national committees should be receiving minutes and committee information very soon. Please take time to prepare for the committee work at national convention. It is that grassroots committee work that helps make the NAAE strong and lets your voice be heard.

Thank you, thank you for your active involvement in your professional organization, and thank you for the hard work you do educating students every day. You are the driving force behind making the NAAE organization run so efficiently and keeping agricultural education strong across the U.S.

Please send me a quick email or phone call with any thoughts or concerns you have about issues facing our profession. I continue to support your ideas and promote them at the national level, and I'm happy to visit with you anytime. It has been an honor to serve you and the NAAE organization.

Region II



Kathy Conerly, Region II VP
Email: kconerly1@bellsouth.net

The FFA Convention was a great success, and the NAAE staff and board enjoyed meeting and visiting with all of you who stopped by our booth in the career show. Thanks to all who competed in our "Are You Smarter than Your Ag Teacher" game. The students seemed to really enjoy it and the teachers, as always, were good sports about the competition.

If you'd like to download the game for teacher recruitment purposes in your states, or just for classroom reviews, it has been made available to you at www.naae.org. Alissa Smith, our NAAE Associate Director, made up the game template and has offered it to all for no charge.

If you'd like to have the competitive edge professionally, don't forget about all the possibilities coming up at our NAAE Convention. Join us at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas, Dec. 11-15. Hear dynamic speakers. Earn professional development credit hours by attending workshops. Network with teachers from around your state and across the country. You can still get information and register on the NAAE website. Invest in YOUR future!

Some of our Region II teachers have indeed invested in their future and have become NAAE award winners. They will all be recognized at the convention. Visit the NAAE Award Winners page to see all this year's award winners. Congratulations to the winning teachers and programs for a job well done!!

Remember, professional development is essential to reaching that goal of being a truly effective teacher. I look forward to visiting with everyone in Vegas!

Region III



Tom Hofmann, Region III VP
Email: thofmann@spsne.org

With National FFA Convention in the books, I would like to thank everyone who had a chance to stop at the NAAE booth and visit. It is always energizing when that opportunity to talk with fellow instructors from across the country presents itself. Congratulations to all the teachers and students on their accomplishments during the convention.

I am really looking forward to the NAAE convention in Las Vegas this December. As leaders in our profession, we have the opportunity to brainstorm a vision for the future. I trust that your travel plans and registration have been completed and you're excited to tackle the issues facing agricultural education. I look forward to meeting all the award winners from Region III. On a more serious note, because we are in Las Vegas, remember there is a time to work and a time to play. We will need to elect or re-elect a member for Region III secretary. I would like to thank Craig McEnany for doing an outstanding job over the past two years.

It's not too early to be mentioning Region III summer conference in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. You can check out what LaCrosse has to offer at their visitor's bureau website —

www.explorelacrosse.com. Promoting our summer meeting now will allow members to plan accordingly.

Personally, my wife Lynn and I are expecting two bundles of joy sometime in March. Wow, life could only be better if Nebraska could win a football game.

See ya in December.

Regional Update

Region IV



Greg Curlin, Region IV VP
Email: gcurlin@switzerland.k12.in.us

There's a quote in a John Deere book I own that says, "Progress depends on how fast we can let go of the past." I agree with this, but also know that without learning from our past it can be difficult to move forward. In the past month I have had much experience with the role of agricultural education in curriculum changes. It seems one direction is focused on what consumers expect from agriculture while the other focuses on how traditional agriculture has been replaced by an agriscience curriculum. In reality, don't both directions need to be incorporated?

Workshops and conferences are a great a place to learn how to do just that. No one is asking any teacher to let go of traditional agriculture practices, but opening the minds of students to innovations in the industry is a must.

We need to find a way to make our curriculums fit into the school's guidelines for graduation. One way is to work with your colleges and state staff to develop a curriculum that matches the needs for state graduation requirements. There is always a solution if we work together with open minds to accept change. Innovation opens the door to many new possibilities.

Most importantly, take the time to enjoy your family as the holiday season approaches. I have discovered the value of utilizing ag advisory board and alumni members to assist with the calendar demand required of us. Good luck with the scheduling of a new year. Check www.naae.org for the most recent updates and region conference planning.

Region V



Ray Nash, Region V VP
Email: rnash@alcorn.k12.ms.us

In the south we are in the middle of what some call a religious experience; the midpoint of the SEC and ACC football seasons. For those who do not know, I love my MSU Bulldogs, so I try to slip in a football game or two. My son Carson is five, and it is time to assure that he bleeds Maroon and White. To accomplish this I expose him to as much of the "State" experience as possible.

Just I do with Carson, we as teachers try to expose our students many agriculture and FFA experiences as possible. A Chinese proverb says "Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I'll understand." Seems to me that could have easily have been the agriculture teacher's motto. I know that we cannot take our students to our NAAE convention, but WOW! what a recruitment tool, so take those convention experiences back to your students. The convention is filled with workshops and sessions to improve the agricultural education experience for our students. Pack a camera or video camera to show your students a side of ag ed they have never seen. Who knows, the experience might provide the direction that one of them needs to make agricultural education their career choice.

Those of you serving as Region V representatives on NAAE committees should soon receive information from your chairperson. For further preparation, review the historical actions of your committee by going to www.naae.org. Look under the membership tab for Board Minutes/Committee Reports.

See yall in Vegas!

Region VI



Sally Shomo, Region VI VP
Email: sshomo@augusta.k12.va.us

Are you ready to take the gamble to make yourself a better teacher and professional in your field? If you are, then you are ready for the NAAE convention in Las Vegas. We have a great convention lined up, with professional development workshops, speakers, award ceremonies and networking, not to mention the ACTE Convention going on just across the road. If you don't gamble a little, you'll never know what you missed. And the best thing about taking a chance with the convention; you won't be losing money at the slots -- you'll be gaining much in the way of experiences that you will be able to use back home with your students.

As the year comes to an end, so does my vice presidency. It has been an honor to serve Region VI. You guys are awesome and I greatly appreciate all the support you have given me over the years. As I run for the office of president-elect, I again ask for your support and thank you for all that you do in your states and our region. A special thanks to Ken Couture who has served as our regional secretary this year and who will be a great regional vice president in the coming years!

As my favorite holiday approaches, remember all we have to be thankful for...family, friends, a great profession and the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the students that we work with every day.

Looking forward to seeing you in Las Vegas as we "Invest in the Future." What an honor it will be to present awards to our Region VI winners! Congratulations for a job well done. Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to all!

Visiting Legislators and Other Decision Makers

Make the Most of Your Visit



*Wm. Jay Jackman
NAAE Executive Director*

Meeting with influential persons, let's call them "decision makers" (to include legislators, legislative staff members, school administrators, school board members, community/industry leaders, and others) is a very effective way to communicate positive messages about your agricultural education program or to convey a message about a specific legislative issue. Here are some suggestions to consider when planning a visit with a decision maker.

PLAN YOUR VISIT CAREFULLY

Be clear about what it is you want to achieve; determine in advance with which decision maker you need to meet to achieve your purpose.

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

When attempting to meet with a decision maker, contact the appointment secretary/scheduler. Explain your purpose and who you represent. It is easier for staff to arrange a meeting if they know what you wish to discuss and your relationship to the area or interests represented by the decision maker. For specific tips on scheduling meetings with members of the United States Congress, click here: http://www.naae.org/advocacy/advocacytools/media/Scheduling_Meetings_with_Members_of_Congress_on_Capitol_Hill.doc (You can easily adjust these tips to be used for state legislators and other decision makers.)

BE PROMPT AND PATIENT

When it is time to meet with a decision maker, be punctual and be patient. It is not uncommon for a legislator to be late or to have a meeting interrupted, due to a crowded schedule. If interruptions do occur, be flexible. When the opportunity presents itself, continue your meeting with staff.

BE PREPARED

Whenever possible, bring to the meeting information and materials supporting your position. Decision makers are required to take positions on many different issues. In some instances, they may lack important details about the pros and cons of a particular matter. It is therefore helpful to share with the decision

maker information and examples that demonstrate clearly the impact or benefits associated with a particular issue or piece of legislation.

BE POLITICAL

Decision makers want to represent the best interests of their constituents. "All politics are local!" Wherever possible, demonstrate the connection between what you are requesting and the interests of the constituency. If possible, describe how you or your group can be of assistance to him/her. Where it is appropriate, don't hesitate to ask for a commitment. You have to "close the sale."

BE RESPONSIVE

Be prepared to answer questions or provide additional information, in the event the decision maker expresses interest or asks questions. Follow up the meeting with a thank you letter that outlines the different points covered during the meeting, and send along any additional information and materials requested.

CAPITOL HILL UPDATE

The United States Congress has completed its work on the FY 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill (known as the "Labor H" bill). Quite some time ago, the U.S. House of Representatives approved their version of the Labor H bill that included a \$25 million increase for the Perkins Basic State Grant. Thanks to some excellent work from the agricultural education community, including contacts made by Dr. MeeCee Baker, former NAAE president (actually NVATA back in those days!) from Pennsylvania, the U.S. Senate has agreed to the \$25 million increase in the Basic State Grant. The final bill, including the \$25 million increase, was sent to President Bush for signature on November 8, 2007.

President Bush has threatened to veto the Labor H bill because it appropriates more money for education than he recommended in the executive budget he released to Congress in February 2007. Congressional leaders made an attempt to package the Labor H bill with the Military Construction/Veterans Administration bill, which would increase the chances of the president signing the bill. However, this effort failed to pass in the Senate. Since the Labor H bill has gone to the president as a stand-alone bill, it is unclear whether Congress has enough votes for the bill to make it veto-proof.

To encourage your members of Congress to support the Labor H bill with the \$25 million increase for the Basic State Grant, visit the NAAE Legislative Action Center. <http://capwiz.com/naae/home>.

SPEC Grant Specifically to Fund Agricultural Education Programs

We all have a special project that we would love to implement in our programs – something that would enhance instruction, help students grasp a concept, or attract a different population to our classes. If this project has been on the back burner because of a lack of funds, your opportunity is here.

Secondary and Two-Year Postsecondary Agriculture Education Challenge (SPEC) Grants are awarded to promote and strengthen teaching programs in agriscience and agribusiness at secondary and 2-year postsecondary institutions by enhancing curricula, increasing faculty teaching competencies, promoting higher education to prepare students for scientific and professional careers, incorporating agriscience or agribusiness subject matter into other instructional programs, facilitating joint initiatives among other educational institutions, and by responding to identified State, regional, national or international educational needs.

The USDA has just posted the 2008 Request for Applications (RFA) at <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/educationchallengessecondaryhep.cfm>

Visit this site to see eligibility guidelines, application procedures, and abstracts projects that have been funded in the past.

Proposals are due no later than January 11, 2008. One thing to keep in mind — all proposals must be submitted through the [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) website. To submit through [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), submitters must have a DUNS number and be registered with the Central Contractor Registry. It can take up to a month to become registered with CCR and obtain a DUNS number if your organization does not already have one. The request for applications provides specific information on completing this process.

NAAE Member Named Minnesota Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year

Carl Aakre, NAAE member and agri-science teacher at Perham High School in Perham, Minnesota was named Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year in September. Aakre was honored at a special surprise ceremony at the school, and in his honor the school received a \$10,000 grant from the Wal-Mart Foundation.

“This award is to recognize those teachers who go the extra mile for their students and instill a love of learning long after graduation,” said Paul Pflipsen, Fargo, N.D., Sam’s Club manager. “The associates at our club honored Mr. Aakre as a local Teacher of the Year winner in May, and we are so proud that he is being recognized as a state winner.”

“Leadership is an area in which few shine like Mr. Aakre,” wrote Tamara Uselman, superintendent of Perham-Dent Public Schools, in a letter to the Wal-Mart Foundation. “His passion for agri-science education, his natural curiosity, and his internal drive to do more, better, faster, and with more relevance for students makes him a great leader. His work inspires students, creates superb learning experiences, and develops links with the larger community.”

Wal-Mart’s Teacher of the Year program is one of the largest teacher recognition efforts in the country, giving back more than \$5 million this year to the schools of winning teachers.

Get current updates on what’s happening with your state and federal legislators

NAAE LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER
www.naae.org/advocacy/legactioncenter

NAAE Announces the 2007 ANLA Grant Program Recipients

Congratulations to the 2007 recipients of the NAAE American Nursery and Landscape Association’s grant program.

The ANLA grant program’s objective is to build outstanding instructional programs that prepare students to enter nursery and landscape related careers and/or higher education in areas related to nursery/landscape.

The six grant recipients received \$650 each to use toward capital purchases, equipment, software, plant material, curriculum development or instructional materials for their nursery or landscaping program.

Amy Nichols, Parma High School, Idaho

Marilyn Seidlitz, Duncanville High School, Texas

Richard Dykstra, Lake Mills High School, Wisconsin

Jim Scott, Tolles Career and Technical Center, Ohio

Argene Claxton, Perry High School, Georgia

Charles Mavrelion, Sound School Regional Vocational Aquaculture Center, Connecticut



Meet the NAAE President-Elect Candidates!

Kevin Fochs

2004-07 NAAE Region I Vice President

Since 1981 when I first started teaching high school agricultural education in a small high school in Hobson, Montana, I have seen the pendulum of educational reform swing many directions. Currently the public's seemingly sole educational focus is directed to No Child Left Behind. It seems career and technical education and specifically agricultural education has been put on the back burner. Looking at other significant problems facing education today we see a nationwide epidemic of dropout rates, teacher shortages and numerous other educational issues. Education is often blamed for many of society's problems.

It is not an easy task, but the NAAE should be a leader in educational reform specific to agriculture education. What direction should our pendulum be swinging? I think our grass roots NAAE organization truly has a shared vision and together we can all move in the same direction. How do we do this? What should our focus be? As I prepare to run for this leadership role in the NAAE, here are a few of my thoughts concerning our future direction.

MARKETING—We need to blow our own horn. Agricultural education is a benefit to any student's learning experience and it fosters creativity, problem solving, leadership, integrity, citizenship and numerous skills essential for success in life. Experimenting with increasing academic graduation requirements, additional testing, and more core classes are not the only possible solutions to education's problems. No one disagrees that students need increased rigor in today's school systems, but we see many schools directing their focus strictly to academics. Our programs keep kids in school. A national study found that students who score low on testing were five times less likely to drop out of school if over half of their courses were in career and technical education. Students exposed to Ag. Ed. apply math and science on a daily basis. We need to quit preaching to the choir and let the nation know how students who enroll in agricultural education benefit and how our programs provide those essential life skills for future success.

COMMUNICATION—The *You Tube* revolution is upon us. *Ipods*, cell phones and email are the norm and yet NAAE is often asking if we should be sending communications out by hard copy. The organization has made great strides in new electronic technology with an electronic newsletter, the NAAE website and the Ag. Ed. list serve, but are we still getting the message to all of our members. We need to stay progressive but hear from our grassroots members. We need to make sure we meet everyone's needs when we incorporate new communication methods and provide the necessary training of these new technologies so we don't leave anyone behind.

RECRUITMENT—The nation is facing a shortage of agricultural teachers, and we need to work to not only stop the shortage but to add new quality programs. I have often said that we are the best teacher recruiters but we don't often tell our students the benefits of our profession. If the lofty goal of 10 x 15 is ever to become a reality it will take our support and many innovative recruitment ideas. Our profession needs teachers who will work towards this goal and we need to involve all of our partners in Team Ag. Ed. in this mission.

ADVOCACY—Legislative action should be driven from the local level. We need to assist this process by providing the tools and support to make it successful. We can use legislative support for increased Perkins funding, extended summer programs, new programs, mentoring and teacher recruitment, but it must come from important relationships that have been developed at the local level. We need to get all states represented at the National Policy Seminar and develop local networks that can lobby at all levels of government.

Even after 25 years of teaching I continue learning new things daily. I learn from my teaching experiences, from networking with my peers and from my involvement in outstanding professional organizations. I have always said that the NAAE is **YOUR** organization and **YOUR** involvement will make it the organization that represents **YOU**. I welcome your ideas to keep NAAE strong from the grassroots level and would appreciate your support in the upcoming election for your future NAAE president elect.



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Meet the NAAE President-Elect Candidates!

Sally Shomo

2005-07 NAAE Region VI Vice President

It was 1976, my sophomore year in high school, when my role model steered me toward my life's path. That role model and mentor was my Agricultural Education instructor. Even though few females were teaching agriculture at that time, it did not deter my decision to become an agricultural educator. Having grown up on our family's dairy and poultry farm with three brothers, I knew that agriculture production was a way of life, but not my career choice. Many life-changing experiences as an agricultural education student convinced me that my heart was in the field of teaching. Upon graduation from Virginia Tech, I was hired to teach agricultural education in my home county. The last 26 years are, as they say, "history."

My passion is teaching agriculture. It is a joy to work with students who wear the blue and gold jackets, and to be given the opportunity to help mold their young lives. I find it a privilege to give back to the profession that encouraged and molded me.



As a member and officer in the NAAE, my vision is to engage both agricultural education students and teachers. As a candidate for president-elect, I will promote opportunities, service and advocacy to make our organization even stronger.

I believe there are four keys to the successful growth of NAAE:

- **Recruitment and Retention of Teachers** – In keeping with the *10 X 15 Initiative*, we must be an active force in helping to recruit students into the agricultural education profession. We must then work to mentor them as they begin their teaching careers.
- **Continued Advocacy on the Local, State and National Levels** – I believe that advocacy starts on the local level. Locally, we can make the biggest difference in issues that affect our programs on **ALL** levels.
- **Networking and Communication** – By developing partnerships with other organizations and keeping members informed, we will continue to grow and offer expanded services to our members.
- **Service** – NAAE is your organization. I hope to offer services that will enhance **YOUR** potential as an agricultural educator.

NAAE's membership and leadership must be strong to meet the increasing needs of our students, our FFA Chapters, and Agricultural Education. If given the opportunity to become your president-elect, I will continue to maintain the professionalism that you have come to expect. Working together, we will continue to mold and shape NAAE, taking it to even greater levels. It is with passion, experience, dedication and insight that we will productively be "Investing in the Future." I would be proud and honored to serve as your president-elect of the NAAE and I welcome your questions and comments.

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Dates & Events

NAAE Convention -- December 11-15, 2007, Las Vegas, NV
NAAE Region I Conference -- April 16-19, 2008, Park City, UT
NAAE Region II Conference -- June 15-18, 2008, Jonesboro, AR
NAAE Region III Conference -- June 17-19, 2008, Lacrosse, WI
NAAE Region IV Conference -- June 23-25, 2008, Bowling Green, KY
NAAE Region V Conference -- June 30-July 2, 2008, Daytona, FL
NAAE Region VI Conference -- June 17-19, 2008, Charles Town, West Virginia

NAAE Seeks Applicants for Summer Internship Program

NAAE is once again seeking the best and brightest for its summer internship program. We will have three positions available for this highly competitive paid summer internship program.

ADVOCACY INTERN (ONE POSITION)

This intern's primary assignment will be to assist with national advocacy for school-based agricultural education. Under the supervision of the NAAE executive director and the ACTE senior director of public policy, the intern will assist in influencing individuals and groups in the Washington, DC metropolitan area who are in a position to support school-based agricultural education as a part of our nation's career and technical education system. The intern's duties will vary from assisting with NAAE's and ACTE's day-to-day public policy activities, to working with agriculture teachers who are attending National FFA's Washington Leadership Conference program, to conducting personal visits with members of Congress and their staff persons.

COMMUNICATIONS INTERN (TWO POSITIONS)

These interns' primary assignment will be writing news releases, presentation scripts, and newsletter entries for 2007-08 NAAE award winners, contacting award winners for photographs, and other NAAE convention related tasks. The writings will be included in publications such as the 2007-08 NAAE Annual Report (a web-based document), NAAE News & Views, other ag ed publications and the local newspapers of award winners.

The application deadline for all three positions is February 28, 2008. For complete details about these positions, including how to apply, visit www.naae.org/links/internships.



2007 advocacy intern Bill Munns working the NAAE booth at 2007 National FFA Convention

Professional Development Opportunity

Greenhouse Crop Production & Engineering Design Short Course, January 20-23, 2008, Holiday Inn Palo Verde, Tucson Arizona. Hosted by the Controlled Environment Agriculture Center, UofA College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Attendees will learn the best way to develop a successful greenhouse operation and interact with some of the world's leading controlled environment agriculture experts. This year's theme is "Eye on Economics." Registration is \$499 for early bird and \$599 after December 10, 2007. For more information and to register, visit ag.arizona.edu/ceac/ or contact Glenn McCreedy, coordinator, at 520-626-9566, gmcc@ag.arizona.edu