



National Association of Agricultural Educators

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News Release

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Smyrna Middle School Agriculture Teacher Selected as One of Top Agricultural Educators in the Nation

SAN ANTONIO, Texas. – Holly Hufford, agricultural educator at Smyrna Middle School in Smyrna, Del. is one of only six individuals nationwide who received the Outstanding Agricultural Education Teacher Award, given at the National Association of Agricultural Educators annual convention in San Antonio, Texas on November 28.

Hufford's teaching philosophy is one that strives to implement integrity, compassion, respect, responsibility, and perseverance. When it comes to classroom instruction, she works to provide many opportunities for her students. They participate in various lab activities and hands-on exploration. She believes that inquiry-based and experiential-based instruction will not only teach her students "how-to" but will also allow them to demonstrate their mastery of a curriculum related skill. Hufford uses multiple teaching strategies to ensure that all students, no matter what their learning style, have the opportunity to understand and apply the skills they have learned in her classroom.

As an agricultural educator, Hufford strives to establish a curriculum that is thought provoking, hands-on, and encourages critical thinking. Students in her classroom have had an active role in animal grooming, training, and assist in canine whelping. Her eighth grade agriscience students also have the opportunity to experience various greenhouse production practices including inventory, plan, plant, transplant, asexually propagate, price, and sale products within the greenhouse. These skills help to prepare her students for Future careers, and allow them to think critically about and apply their knowledge gained while in her classroom.

Hufford believes it is beneficial to all programs for their educators to get out of their school environment and attend professional development events. She currently serves as the Delaware Association of Agricultural Educators President, and previously served as both the Treasurer from 2008-2011 and the Vice President from 2016 to 2017. She has also attended four NAAE Region VI Conferences, and three NAAE annual conventions. After attending these events she stated that she comes back with new ideas and strategies to implement in her classroom.

Each of the six regional Outstanding Teacher Award winners was recognized at the NAAE convention in San Antonio, Texas. The Outstanding Teacher Award is sponsored by Caterpillar, Inc. and Tractor Supply Company as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

NAAE is the professional organization in the United States for agricultural educators. It provides its more than 8,000 members with professional networking and development opportunities, professional liability coverage, and extensive awards and recognition programs. The mission of NAAE is “professionals providing agricultural education for the global community through visionary leadership, advocacy and service.” The NAAE headquarters are in Lexington, Ky.

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