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Incorporating Technology in the Classroom

americans are bombarded with advertising every day for the latest gizmos and gadgets designed to do everything from entertain us to make our lives easier. Teachers are not exempt from this phenomenon.

While the sheer speed at which technology is moving can be intimidating, it can also be exhilarating for those who make the effort to understand it and how it might be applied in the classroom.

Teachers who are stepping into this brave new world are finding the rewards worthy of the effort required. First, they are finding equipment that can help them teach in different ways and therefore help students understand the subjects more fully. Many are finding that the technology streamlines the education process, resulting in more "aha" moments. This translates to more time focused on learning and better student performance in the long run.

Teachers are also finding that the technology attracts today's techno-savvy students.

Students who might initially be drawn into an agriculture program by the nifty equipment, soon become absorbed in the subject matter they are studying via the technology vehicle. They quickly become engaged learners.

However, as with any other tool, technology is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Teachers must carefully choose technology that will enhance their subject matter, not detract from it. Have an educational goal in mind for whatever technology you consider acquiring.

Overcoming the Challenges

The primary challenges that stand in the way of incorporating this technology are funding and training. With school budgets tighter than ever, teachers must be creative in finding funding. The good news is that there is considerable funding available via grants and other non-traditional funding mechanisms. Many teachers are using Perkins funds to add technology to their classrooms. In addition, as the technology becomes more widely available, its price comes down.

Training is another issue. Some teachers have access to a technology coordinator in their schools, others must reach out to their community or beyond. The good news is that much of this equipment is plug-and-play or has a fairly low learning curve. You'll want to check into the technical support the seller offers and make sure they'll be there to walk you through the details.

The bottom line is that technology is not going to go away. If we expect to prepare our students to compete in tomorrow's work place, we must help them learn to use technology. Educators must model an attitude of life-long learning and help their students adopt it as their own.



Syngenta Congratulates the 2003 Outstanding Teacher Award Winners

Bill Kittinger, Eldorado High School Eldorado, Illinois

Kittinger, winner of the 2004 Syngenta Advocate for Agricultural Education award, has evolved agricultural education at Eldorado High School from a small, 28-student program to an extensive curriculum that includes ag business management, horticulture, aquaculture, animal science and ag mechanics. He also changed his curriculum so students enrolled in horticulture and ag business management can receive science and math credit, respectively. This increased program enrollment and allows students to earn credits for graduation. Kittinger's hands-on approach to learning has allowed students to take pride and ownership of their activities and has helped build a strong FFA chapter.

Al Griffin, Beulah High School Valley, Alabama

Griffin's success in promoting the ag program at Beulah High School can be seen in the increasing volume of students participating. In addition, Griffin's experience at schools in two different communities has allowed him to adapt teaching skills to students with different interests. Griffin also meets regularly with business and industry leaders in order to ensure that his curriculum complies with current industry standards. His dedication to continual learning has allowed students a step up in preparation and interest in agriculture fields beyond high school.

Mike Martin, Walla Walla High School Walla Walla, Washington

By partnering with Walla Walla Community College and local businesses, Martin has created a broad range of opportunities for each student to find their niche. Focusing on student strengths and community needs, Martin developed curriculum about sales and service, job interviews and ag careers and shares his curricula with ag educators across the country. With the development of the ag careers curriculum, his program became the first in the state to receive Tech Prep credits in agriculture. Realizing many students didn't have a place to raise livestock projects, Martin secured grants to renovate an old school barn into a learning laboratory where students can raise their own livestock and integrate laboratory portions of his vet tech class, allowing hands-on interaction and learning.



Outstanding Teacher Award winners (left to right) Mike Martin - Region I, Becky Smith - Region II, Andrew Rowe - Region III, Bill Kittinger - Region IV, Al Griffin - Region V, Deb Seibert - Region VI, Sarah Hull, Vice President, Communications, Syngenta Corporation.

Andrew Rowe, Iowa Valley Community School Marengo, Iowa

As the Marengo FFA Chapter sought to build a new greenhouse, Rowe's excellent relationships with the community helped secure enough donations that a formal fundraising program was unnecessary. Rowe has grown the chapter to include 40 percent of the student body through positive publicity of the chapter in local media, recruitment activities and administration involvement at varying levels. Continual learning in professional organizations, in the classroom and in the field have allowed Rowe to stay current on trends and teaching methods, allowing students the best education possible.

Deb Seibert, Manheim Central High School Ephrata, Pennsylvania

Seibert was integral in establishing an introductory ag course at Manheim Central High School that has enticed non-traditional agriculture students into the program. All students are required to take at least one ag course to graduate, which helps give all students a better understanding of agriculture and the opportunities available in the field. When Seibert began teaching at Manheim, 72 students were enrolled in the program. Today it is a three-teacher department with more than 650 students. Seibert has also been active in promoting continual learning for teachers in the area, organizing workshops, in-service sessions and visits to neighboring classrooms.

Becky Smith, Guthrie High School Guthrie, Oklahoma

Greenhouse work at Guthrie High School has led Smith's students to be involved in several areas of horticulture and floriculture at state and national levels, as well as beyond graduation. The Internet has also become a powerful tool in Smith's classroom. She uses the agriculture education web page as a marketing tool for families and students, and also has a learning tool for research and other classroom activities. Smith continues to use new technologies, taking distance courses to teach herself, and relies on hands-on activities to teach students horticulture and communications.



Making a Difference

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The FFA Mission

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

The Agricultural Education Mission

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

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This publication is available online at
[\[www.ffa.org/news/html/ffapubsindex.html\]](http://www.ffa.org/news/html/ffapubsindex.html).

Watch for the LPS Logo



The logo shows how this issue of FFA Advisors Making a Difference relates to Local Program Success, a national initiative to strengthen agricultural education programs. You'll see this icon on all FFA materials. The shaded apples show which areas the materials address.

Perspectives

Technology: Who Needs It?



By Mark A. Badertscher
Liberty-Benton FFA Advisor
Findlay, Ohio

agriculture is going to change more in the next 10 years than it has in the last 100 years and I'm glad I'm going to be a part of it.

You've probably heard that from an FFA member in a recruitment video. Now think how that same type of message might apply to technology in the classroom. It might be something like, "Technology in the classroom is going to change more in the next year than it has in the last 10 years, and I'm glad I'm going to be a part of that."

Integrating technology into the classroom should become a part of your methodology, not an extra added to the surface. Once you take the time to figure things out, tasks become more of a regular occurrence than a quest. In addition to working out the quirks with your hardware and software, you must learn how to teach while integrating technology naturally. Using computers, scanners, digital cameras and digital video camcorders will become an extension of your usual routine.

Reading and sending e-mail has become as common as doing shop demonstrations. Web pages are old news, but a great place for proud parents to visit. Many chapters have been using digital cameras and PowerPoint presentations for years and a few brave ones are exploring editing their own digital video programs.

Students in the Liberty-Benton Agricultural Education Department receive regular e-mail messages regarding chapter activities. They have access to online calendars and can check their grades anytime. Seeing their teacher take several digital photos

during an SAE visit is expected, as they know they will see these photos later in presentations, proficiency award applications, or even as a part of their own digital portfolio. They don't question why their FFA advisor is taping them at a career development event because they have seen this video used for training, recruitment and banquet presentations. When they graduate, they can expect a video CD or DVD of their senior year. Prospective members are given copies so they can see what things FFA members do that makes agriculture classes so much different.

Are your photos digitally organized and filed according to the way you plan to use them? Do you have an adult class that would like to learn how to use the soil survey from a CD-ROM? Is there a way your students can work at home and save it online to the school server so they can access it in your class?

Whether you have one computer in your classroom or a lab of your own, you can make use of technology. Sometimes you may have to reserve time in the computer lab or if you are lucky, you might have access to a mobile laptop cart with a wireless connection to your school's network.

It will take extra time to develop your technology skills, but the benefits your students gain will be worth it. Learn how to use a new device and develop one new skill this school year. Practice this skill and watch your interest grow. More importantly, practice this skill and watch your students' interest grow.

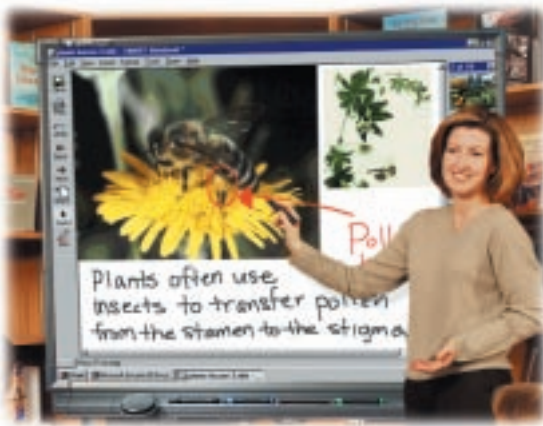
Smart Tools for Teachers

just because she teaches in a school with only 75 students K-12, don't think for a minute that Ann (Newhouse) Ronning is behind the curve when it comes to incorporating technology into the Bainville, Mont., agriculture program. In fact, Ronning's collection of techno-gadgetry might make even James Bond envious!

"With today's students, you have to keep up with technology," Ronning says. "The students are so excited about technology. It is a great way to attract and keep their interest."

Interactive White Board

One of Ronning's most used pieces of equipment is a SMART Board™ interactive white board. "When the white board is activated, I can write over what is being projected," Ronning explains. "By using it, connected to my computer, I can go online and interact with websites. I use it to build sets of class notes. It creates a thumbnail, and you can move from page to page, similar to a PowerPoint presentation."



Like this instructor, Ronning and Fochs rely on interactive white boards to enhance their courses.

Ronning combines the power of the interactive white board with other devices to enhance her courses. "I have a video presenter, and use it to project images of just about anything from a small engine part to something on a microscope slide," Ronning explains. "This saves a lot of time and energy, because instead of each student having to look at an engine part or through a microscope and get it focused, then identify the details, I can just project the image and point out different features. It works great for things like viewing bull semen as part of my artificial insemination lesson. The students can actually see the sperm swimming around on the slide."

Ronning notes one of the advantages is for students who were absent during any given class. "I can just print off the notes and that student has immediate access to the information."

Another advantage, according to Ronning, is how the device allows the use of a variety of different resources in the learning environment. "It makes me a better teacher," she says.

Embracing Technology

Kevin Fochs teaches agriculture in Livingston, Mont., and echoes Ronning's philosophy regarding embracing technology. "If you don't keep up with technology, you'll find it hard to attract and keep students' attention. I see it as part of my job as a professional to push myself and keep up with technology."

Fochs requires his students to apply technology on a regular basis. "As an example, I assign each member of the freshman class a power tool to research," Fochs explains. "They each create and deliver a PowerPoint presentation on their tool and how to use it safely. They

have to use digital video and still images to show correct versus incorrect procedures. I used to stand up in front and preach about safety. Now, they do it and they buy into it. It's much more effective."



Fochs instructs a group of students on the use of handheld GPS units.

GPS and Mapping

Fochs recently added ARCVIEW mapping software to his program's arsenal. "I teach students how to use GPS units (Garmin Legend) as part of the overall surveying unit," he says. "The ARCVIEW software brings GPS points into a map and allows the user to layer different elements. The students have developed a map of Park County along with plotting their home places, which are hot linked to photos. It is a neat addition to our surveying unit."

Fochs continues, "We are planning to use the equipment to plot weed patches and we'll be able to compare them year to year to see if the patches are growing, shrinking or moving. There are so many applications for this technology. We are just beginning to scratch the surface."

Learn more about SmartBoards at www.smarttech.com/education/. More information about the video presenter may be found at www.k-log.com/products/index.html. Learn more about ARCVIEW at <http://gis.esri.com/library/userconf/proc97/proc97/to400/pap353/p353.html>.

Creating a Wireless Classroom

don Thorn had an idea—eliminate or at least minimize classroom downtime by creating a wireless classroom. Thorn envisioned that students could create electronic files of information throughout their four years in the McClave, Colo., agricultural education program, rather than creating four large notebooks. By the time they graduate, students will have developed comprehensive electronic portfolios, along with a solid set of computing skills.

Designing the System

Thorn designed a system based on the following criteria:

- Each student will have a laptop computer in each class
- All computers will have wireless connectivity
- All computers must have adequate battery power to last through several classes
- Students will receive assignments via e-mail and through the department's website (www.mcclaveschools.org/ag.htm)

The system contains 17 laptop computers that are housed in a file cabinet outfitted with wheels and power strips. The cabinet can be wheeled into a storage closet and locked for security purposes.

“Before, we **wasted a lot of time** with students sharing computers. Now, everything is **stored electronically** and **each student** can access his or her files from **any of the machines**.”

Finding the Finances

To finance the system, Thorn applied for a grant. While he was unsuccessful in the grant application, the project generated enough interest that his school decided to fund the project as a pilot program.

“I really wanted to create a one-to-one ratio of computers to students to eliminate downtime,” Thorn says. “Before, we wasted a lot of time with students sharing computers. Now, everything is stored electronically and each student can access his or her files from any of the machines.”

Thorn is pleased with the outcome. “With the new system, we finished closing record books, updating state degree and proficiency award applications in about two-and-a-half weeks. That task used to take twice that long. Now we can invest that time in other learning activities.”

Thorn isn't the only one pleased with the results. The McClave school system is considering purchasing another 30 laptops based on how well the system worked in the agriculture department.

Eliminating the Bugs

As with any new system, however, Thorn cautions there are bugs to be worked out. “We had some down time initially,” he says. “We spent three days trying to troubleshoot a printing problem. We spent quite a bit of time on the phone with tech support and with Jason Larison, who teaches agriculture in Holton, Kan., and pioneered the wireless classroom.”



Students in the McClave, Colo., agriculture program use laptop computers with wireless connectivity during class.

Power management is another issue. “We have to be really careful about managing battery life and making sure the cabinet gets plugged in when it is supposed to be,” Thorn says. “You don't want your students to lose battery power halfway through your class.”

He also encourages teachers to invest time researching their web hosting options. “We had a lot of challenges with our web host. Make sure you select a viable web host that will meet your needs.”

New Opportunities

The wireless system offers many new opportunities for Thorn and his students. One of them is being able to use an online testing service. “We use quia.com and have been pleased with it,” Thorn says. “The teacher builds the test, then students can log on and take the test. The questions appear in a random order, so it prevents or at least reduces cheating problems. Then, the teacher logs on and receives the results. I can share my tests with other teachers and I spend a lot less time grading.”

Thorn continues, “In addition to tests, you can create interactive activities. I use it to introduce new topics and also for closure at the end of units.”



Digital Photography 101

"A picture is worth a thousand words."

the evolution of digital photography has brought powerful tools to consumers. Agriculture teachers are applying this technology to enhance everything from classroom lessons to award applications to news coverage. However, as with all technology, understanding the basics is critical to success.

Today's digital cameras offer a wide range of features and come in an equally broad price range. If you're in the market for a new camera, take time to think through the features you will use versus those that you will never need. There is no use paying for extra bells and whistles if you never use them. If the technology is intimidating, find a student who is interested in the topic and ask him or her to research cameras and provide suggestions. The journalism teacher might also be helpful.

When shopping for gear, you'll want to test a few cameras, see how they feel in your hand and how easy it is to manipulate the controls. If the camera is too complex, it may not be the best choice for an FFA chapter where multiple people will need to use it.

Important Features

The most important features on a basic camera are likely to be the speed at which the camera responds to the user (i.e. is there a long pause from the time you press the shutter until the camera saves

the image) and the resolution levels at which images may be saved. While lower resolutions are fine if you're going to be using the images on screen or in PowerPoint presentations, they will not



The top photo was saved at 300 DPI. The photo to the right was saved at 72 DPI.

many images to any given memory device, be it a memory card, CD or hard drive. As a general rule of thumb, file sizes of 1 megabyte or larger will print well. Refer to the chart for more information.

The National FFA Organization relies on teachers and members to provide images for use in a variety of materials—everything from this publication, *FFA Advisors Making a Difference*, to the *Chapter Innovators Guide*, national convention award presentations and more. When the only images that are available are of low resolution, the end product will not represent the chapter or members well.

work well if you plan to print the images, either on your printer or in an offset printing application. You'll want to select a camera that can save at least a 3-megapixel image.

Many agriculture teachers bank images of their students for use in chapter, degree and award applications, only to find that when they go to print the images they don't look so great, even though they appear fine on screen. This phenomenon is due to resolution. Computers and televisions display images at 72 DPI (dots per inch) in RGB (e.g. using a combination of red, green and blue pixels). Printers (inkjet, laser and offset devices) require resolutions of 300 DPI or greater and use CMYK formats (e.g. the four inks used in full-color printing—cyan, magenta, yellow and black).

Thus, if you want to print your images, you will need a file with a resolution of at least 300 DPI. Of course, the higher the resolution, the larger the file size. Therein lies the rub for many—you can't save as

Resolution and Image Sizes

- 2560 X 1920 pixels = 8.5" X 6" print
- 1600 X 1200 pixels = 5.5" X 4" print
- 1280 X 960 pixels = 3.5" X 2" print
- 640 X 480 pixels = 2" X 1.5" print

As a general rule, it is better to save images in a higher resolution format so that they can be used for a wider range of end uses. While this will require more storage space, you'll have better results in the long run. And, because you can view pictures instantly, you can delete the images you'll never use and it won't cost a cent.

 **Professional Growth**

Technology: Impact on Learning?

agricultural educators have always been fascinated with technology. After all, production technologies in agriculture have made the industry the marvel of the world.

Likewise, when we engaged the use of computers and other related technologies in the classroom, we found a whole new approach or at least an enhancement of the teaching-learning process. We have always sought ways to get students involved in the learning situation.

The problem with new instructional technologies and student activities is that we often over use them or use them inappropriately. Additionally, we may be so intrigued with these gadgets, tools and thingamabobs that the reason for using them is lost and the fascination overtakes us. Playtime is the result. This may be true for the teacher as well as the learner. A favorite question I ask myself is, "When the learner leaves my classroom, will

he/she reflect on the substance of the lesson or the delivery of the message?"

On the other hand, technology goes marching on and we would be foolish to ignore the many advantages that the latest technologies offer our students, specifically the opportunity to learn, gather information, solve problems and make decisions in the learning process. As educators seeking impact from the teaching-learning process, we must continually ask some key questions. These include:

- Are there clear, measurable objectives to be communicated to the learner?
- Did I select the most appropriate technology for the objectives to be achieved?
- Does the technology fit the content/subject matter?
- Why am I using this technology?
- Do I plan on the active involvement of the student/learner?
- What evidence will there be that the intended outcomes have been achieved?

Is this technology used in the real work world?

Does understanding the subject matter depend on use of appropriate instructional technologies?

Does the use of these technologies improve learning?

What is my technology use plan?

Technology of all kinds belongs in our classrooms/laboratories for the simple reason that students have a natural curiosity. Instructional technologies help fuel that need to know. If our use of the latest technologies gives students more reasons to experiment and feed their need to know, the more likely learning has a chance to occur. Bring it on!



Professional Growth



By **Robert A. Martin**
Chair, Department of
Agricultural Education and
Studies, Iowa State University

Alumni Support Needed For Perkins Funding

Since 1917, various congressional appropriations, including the current Perkins Act, have been the primary vehicles through which career and technical education programs like agricultural education and FFA related career-oriented instruction have received critical funding.

Today's workforce requires employees who can read, interpret, strategize, calculate, use technology and communicate clearly. For this reason, it is important to emphasize these skills in our educational system.

This year, the Bush Administration's proposed FY 2004 budget eliminates Perkins funding, transferring the funds to

activities unrelated to agricultural education, including math and science.

While these areas are in need of more focus, it is important for the public to understand what the Perkins Act supports, and what would be lost if it were rescinded. The Perkins Act helps support career and technical education, which involves high-demand course work that meets employers' needs for a highly skilled workforce. Perkins offers state and local school officials flexibility in determining the kinds of programs that meet students' interests and employers' needs.

Postsecondary career and technical education is relevant to the career success of students, and ultimately the economic well-being of this country. This is apparent in the way career and technical education offers career guidance, informa-

tion on career and professional development, and opportunity to learn life skills.

Agriculture educators are encouraged to help members of their community understand the issues surrounding Perkins funding and to use their Alumni affiliates as sounding boards. Parents and alumni should be encouraged to contact their congressional representatives to express their opinions regarding Perkins funding. To obtain your congressional representatives' contact information, visit the "Federal Advocacy for Career and Technical Education" on the National Association of Agricultural Educators' website at www.naae.org



By **Frank Saldaña**
Executive Director
National FFA Alumni Association



Partnerships

NAAE Conference Highlights

the warm Florida sunshine complimented the friendly atmosphere of the 2003 National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) Conference in Orlando last December. Renewed acquaintances, professional camaraderie and serious discussions regarding organizational business were mixed with plenty of celebrations as the organization recognized its outstanding achievers.

In addition to attending professional development workshops and tours, listening to motivational speakers, selecting a new slate of officers and completing association business, conference attendees took in the sights and sounds of Orlando, including a behind-the-scenes tour of Disney. The conference focused on its theme of "Cultivating our Legacy."

Recognition Programs

Agriculture teachers are an interesting group of people. They work diligently day after day to help their students understand agriculture, develop leadership skills and, along the way, learn life's lessons. They strive to enable their students to receive recognition through the myriad of FFA award and incentive programs. The paradox is that these teachers rarely seek recognition themselves.

Thank goodness organizations such as NAAE and FFA seek out teachers who are doing outstanding work, recognize them for their efforts, and share their stories of success from which others may learn and grow professionally. During the NAAE annual conference, an outstanding group of teachers was recognized.

Outstanding Young Member Awards

In any organization, young members are the seeds from which the organization

grows. NAAE recognizes its young members for their successes in the classroom through the Outstanding Young Member Awards Program. NAAE members who have been in the classroom at least three, but not more than five years are eligible to compete for this honor, which is sponsored by John Deere as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The 2003 Outstanding Young Member regional winners are:

- Region I: Jolene Christensen, Wasatch High School, Heber City, Utah
- Region II: Jona Kay Squires, Norman High School, Norman, Okla.
- Region III: Kevin Anderson, Lyons High School, Lyons, Neb.
- Region IV: Tate Forbush, Byron High School, Byron, Michigan
- Region V: David Nixon, Crescent High School, Iva, S.C.
- Region VI: Mia Haaland, Northwestern Regional School, Winsted, Conn.

Outstanding Teacher Awards

This award area recognizes teachers who are at the pinnacle of their profession—those who are conducting the highest quality agricultural education programs. The award criteria include leadership in civic, community, agriculture/agribusiness and professional activities as well as student success. This award is sponsored by Syngenta as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The 2003 Outstanding Teacher regional winners are:



The 2003 NAAE Outstanding Young Members are congratulated by (far left) Tom Hughes and (far right) Cheryl Salley of John Deere.

- Region I: Mike Martin, Walla Walla High School, Walla Walla, Wash.
- Region II: Becky Smith, Guthrie High School, Guthrie, Okla.
- Region III: Andrew Rowe, Iowa Valley High School, Marengo, Iowa
- Region IV: Bill Kittinger, Eldorado High School, El Dorado, Ill.
- Region V: Al Griffin, Beulah High School, Valley, Ala.
- Region VI: Deb Seibert, Menheim Central High School, Ephrata, Pa.

In addition, Syngenta representatives interviewed the six teachers listed above for the Syngenta Agricultural Education Award, which was presented to Bill Kittinger. See the story on page 2.

Outstanding Middle/Secondary Program Awards

Recognizing outstanding agricultural education programs is the objective of this award, which is sponsored by Case IH as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The 2003 Outstanding Middle/Secondary Program regional winners are:

- Region I: Lone Peak High School, Cedar Valley, Utah (Michael Gowans, teacher)

- Region II: Oklahoma Union High School, South Coffeyville, Okla. (Kevin Stacey and David Maxey, teachers)
- Region III: Beaver Dam High School, Beaver Dam, Wisc. (David R. Laatsch, teacher)
- Region IV: Clopton High School, Clarksville, Mo. (Tim Reller and Mike McCrory, teachers)
- Region V: Eastern Randolph High School, Ramseur, N.C. (Raymond Caviness, Amy Kidd and Marguerite Field, teachers)
- Region VI: St. Marys High School, St. Marys, West Virginia (Jason Hughes)

Teacher Mentor Awards

In one way or another, everyone has a mentor. In agricultural education, it is critical that teachers have someone with whom they can talk, ask questions and share ideas. The NAAE Teacher Mentor Award recognizes those educators who lend a hand and mentor others in the profession. This award is sponsored by CEV Multimedia as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The 2003 Teacher Mentor regional winners are:

- Region I: Scott Mortimer, Wilson Creek High School, Wilson Creek, Wash.
- Region II: Larry Liston, Moore High School, Oklahoma City, Okla.
- Region III: John Hobert, Riverland Community College, Cannon Falls, Minn.
- Region IV: William Wheeler, Weberville High School (retired), Weberville, Mich.
- Region V: Ted Turner, Covington High School, Covington, Tenn.
- Region VI: Howard Hill, King William High School, Center Cross, Va.

In all award areas, winners are selected in each of NAAE's six regions. Applications, which are available online at [www.naae.org], are due at the national level May 15, 2004. Check with your state leadership regarding when the applications are due at the state level.



Professional Development

Conference attendees selected from a diverse array of professional development workshops. Topics included:

- Becoming a National Board Certified Teacher
- Photography 101
- Biological Science: DNA, I See
- DiSCover the Language of Leadership
- FFA LifeKnowledge
- Writing Successful Proposals for USDA SPEC Grants
- Sustainability: What's Down Under
- Sales and Service

Additionally, participants were treated to a variety of informative, off-site tours to area businesses. Participants selected from

the following tours: citrus industry, strawberry industry, turf industry, Gatorland, TM Ranch, nursery/horticulture/tissue culture industry, Disney behind the scenes and Disney horticulture.

New Board of Directors

The final item of business on the conference agenda was electing a new slate of board members to lead the organization in the coming year. Roger Teeple, N.C., was elected president. Jeff Maierhofer, Ill., was selected as president elect. Refer to the photo for the remaining board positions.

The 2003-04 NAAE regional secretaries (positions formerly known as alternate regional vice presidents) are:

- Region I: Kevin Fochs, Mont.
- Region II: David Dorrell, Okla.
- Region III: Pam Koenen, Minn.
- Region IV: Greg Curlin, Ind.
- Region V: Dennis Deaton, Ala.
- Region VI: Andy Seibel, Va.

The 2004 NAAE Conference will be held Dec. 7-11 in Las Vegas, Nev. Watch for details on the NAAE website, www.naae.org



NAAE Board of Directors, seated left to right: Roger Teeple (N.C.), president; Jeff Maierhofer (Ill.), president elect. Standing left to right: Allan Sulser (Utah), Region I vice president; Dr. Bill Hunter (Kan.), Region II vice president; Harold Eckler (Mo.), Region IV vice president; Lee James (Miss.), Region V vice president; and Terry Hughes (N.Y.), Region VI vice president. Not available for the photograph was Paul Larson (Minn.), Region III vice president.

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Local Program Success

Technology in the Classroom



By Jim Armbruster, Local
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National FFA Organization

i started working on this article by trying to list all the sources of technology teachers are accessing for use in their classrooms. The real question that came to mind was not what technology do I need to access, but how do I find the resources to incorporate these technologies into my daily lessons?

The first step to answering the "how" is to accept that our industry is changing and the skills that our students will need to be successful are changing also. As instructors, we must teach our students to embrace change and be life-long learners. When we acknowledge the rate at which agriculture technology is changing, we understand the need to create a workforce that embraces life-long learning.

What better way to teach this skill than to model it in our classrooms? Modeling an attitude that will encourage our students to be life-long learners will sometimes challenge our need to be in control. When working with technology that exceeds our

level of training or experience, we must become master facilitators of the learning process. We must create an atmosphere of exploration and learning that will allow the incorporation of these technologies into our classrooms.

Here are a few key areas of new technology I have observed in classrooms across the United States and how the teachers have incorporated them into their daily teaching.

Computers

I observed a teacher who started teaching when an electronic, self-correcting typewriter and a telephone answering machine were high tech. Web pages and the Internet were not even a part of the daily language and computers were the new "toys." This instructor took a stance that the students needed to understand computers and, using grants and career and technical funding, added a computer lab to his classroom. With a basic knowledge of computers, this teacher worked and learned alongside his students to build spreadsheets for basic accounting, budgeting and SAE planning. Word processing programs were used whenever the students needed to write a paper or report, and electronic programs from the National FFA were used by students to complete proficiency award and American degree applications.

To this day, he cannot develop a web page. However, his students have incorporated web design as part of their SAE programs. Even though this teacher was uncomfortable with the use of a computer, his students were given

access to the newest computer technology. In some cases, his students were required to use the technology even when the teacher's skills were limited. How did this happen?

- Creation of partnerships with other teachers who taught classes in computers and web design
- Actively seeking funding sources that would allow the addition of computers to the program
- Adopting the attitude, "I do not know, but we can learn together."

Biotechnology

I have had the opportunity to visit programs that use full-blown biotech laboratories complete with autoclaves, laminar flow hoods, electrophoresis equipment and commercial growing chambers and visited other programs that used a set of shelves with salvaged florescent light fixtures. Materials and equipment for teaching tissue transfer and micro propagation of plants is not complicated. In most cases, growing chambers and transfer chambers are equipment that can be constructed in the agriculture mechanics laboratory.

Today's agriculture teacher must become the master facilitator using community resources that can supply the knowledge and expertise required to expose and teach his or her students how to apply the new technologies. However, more important is to instill in today's students the importance of being a life-long learner and the skills to adapt and use new technologies as they become available.



Professional Growth

Saying Thanks to Those Who Provide FFA Award and Recognition Programs

One of the most important parts of keeping people involved in your local program is thanking them for their contributions of time, effort and funding. This rule also holds true on the state and national levels.

The National FFA Organization is fortunate to have sponsors who are willing to contribute millions of dollars annually to support FFA programs. One of the reasons FFA has consistently been able to raise the level of contributions it receives annually is

because each year sponsors receive notes of gratitude written by accomplished young people from across the country.

As the chapter banquet season hits full stride, students are being recognized for their accomplishments in a wide range of areas. Don't forget to ask each of your chapter winners to write a brief note of thanks to the individuals responsible for funding their awards. To assist with this process, all of the national proficiency award, career development event and agriscience fair sponsor names and addresses follow (in alphabetical order by award/event area).

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Amarillo, TX 79106-4699

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Poultry Evaluation Career Development Event

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Poultry Production Proficiency

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King of Prussia, PA 19406

Stars Recognition Award

Mr. James C. Collins
Vice President, General Manager, DuPont Crop Protection

DuPont Company

Barley Mill Plaza 16/2160
PO Box 80016
Wilmington, DE 19880-0016

Mr. Bernie L. Staller, COO

National FFA Foundation

PO Box 68960
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960

Mr. James R. Little
Administrator

USDA Farm Service Agency

14th & Independence Ave. SW
3086 South Bldg.
Washington, DC 20250

Swine Production Entrepreneurship Proficiency

Mr. Robert DiMarzo

Area President- US Operations

Pfizer Animal Health

150 E 42nd St
New York, NY 10017

Swine Production Placement Proficiency

Dr. Dwight Armstrong,
Ph.D.

President & CEO

Akey/Sunglo

6531 St Rt 503, CS 5002
Lewisburg, OH 45338

Mr. Randy Maclin
Vice President, North America

Phibro Animal Health

One Parker Plaza
Ft. Lee, NJ 70242957

Turfgrass Management Entrepreneurship Proficiency

Ms. Cheryl A. Salley
Manager Community Relations
& Sponsored Programs

John Deere

1515 River Drive 2nd Floor
Moline, IL 61265

Turfgrass Management Placement Proficiency

Mr. Dan Carrothers
Vice President, Chipco Professional Products

Bayer Corporation, Environmental Science

95 Chesnut Ridge Rd
Montvale, NJ 7645

Vegetable Production Proficiency

Mr. John S. Shiely
Product Service Trainer III
Briggs and Stratton Corporation Foundation Inc.
PO Box 702
Milwaukee, WI 532010702



Wildlife Production and Management Entrepreneurship Proficiency

Mr. Martin MacDonald
Director of Corporate Public Relations

Bass Pro Shops Inc.

2500 E Kearney
Springfield, MO 65898

Mr. Matt Musselman
Director, Feed Sales

Land O Lakes

Farmland Feed LLC

PO Box 64281 MS 5370
St. Paul, MN 55164

Wildlife Production and Management Placement Proficiency

Mr. Bernie L. Staller, COO
National FFA Foundation
PO Box 68960
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960

Ms. Darcy A. Betlach
Director of Corporate Affairs
Polaris Industries, Inc.
2100 Highway 55
Medina, MN 55340

Mr. Tom Toman, Conservation Programs Manager
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
2291 W Broadway
PO Box 8249
Missoula, MT 598078249

H.O. Sargent Award

YOU MAKE DIVERSITY WORK

accepting

cultural, racial, age,
gender, ability,
regional differences



being

role
models



developing

programs and activities
that support diversity

connecting



people of different
backgrounds and
interests

H.O. Sargent Award

Nominate an FFA member or non-member who makes diversity work in your community!

For an application or more details, visit www.ffa.org/programs/hosargent/index.html, or contact:
H.O. Sargent Award Program Coordinator, hosargent@ffa.org, 317-802-4244.

THE FFA MISSION: FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MISSION: Agricultural Education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

The National FFA Organization is a resource and support organization that does not select, control or supervise state association, local chapter or individual member activities except as expressly provided for in the National FFA Organization Constitution and Bylaws.

The National FFA Organization affirms its belief in the value of all human beings and seeks diversity in its membership, leadership and staff as an equal opportunity employer.

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TeacherResources

Making Science Come Alive Conference

Using hydroponics to “make science come alive” is what the Science Alive conference has been doing for the past three years. Once again the Flowing Wells FFA Chapter, University of Arizona, Yavapai Community College, Cropping Inc., American Hydroponics and the Aquaponics Journal have teamed up to bring another exciting edition of this hands-on conference. The conference mission is to equip teachers to complete amazing, inexpensive and meaningful science-based projects with their students. The conference topics include hydroponics, aquaculture, tissue culture, biotechnology and program management. The conference will be held in Tucson, Ariz., May 19-22, 2004. Teacher registration is \$420. Special student rates are available. The registration fee covers several meals, tours, classroom curriculum, samples and catalogs. Please visit the website [\[www.ag.arizona.edu/science_alive\]](http://www.ag.arizona.edu/science_alive) for more details and registration forms. You may also contact Aaron Ball via e-mail at [\[baal-aa@flowingwells.k12.az.us\]](mailto:baal-aa@flowingwells.k12.az.us) or via phone at 520-690-2332, for more information.

Ag Census Releases New Data

The 2002 Census of Agriculture recently released preliminary data. The data, which may be accessed online at [\[www.nass.usda.gov/census/\]](http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/), indicate agriculture is becoming increasingly more diverse. The census is the most comprehensive source of statistics portraying our nation's agriculture. It is the only source of uniform agricultural data across the United States. Teachers might find the “Quick Facts” particularly helpful.

Integrating Agriculture

Check these new lessons from the agriculture statistics service that integrate agriculture into English, math, geography, science and social studies skills [\[www.usda.gov/nass/nasskids/resources/resources.htm\]](http://www.usda.gov/nass/nasskids/resources/resources.htm).

Environmental Materials

Looking for excellent materials on environmental education? Check out [\[www.classroomearth.org/\]](http://www.classroomearth.org/).

International Teacher Resources

The FFA Global web site has numerous resources available for teachers to use in their classrooms. Choose from a wide range of lesson plans and interactive global projects. Bring global agriculture into your classroom by visiting: [\[www.ffa.org/programs/global/\]](http://www.ffa.org/programs/global/) online resources or call 317-802-4309.

Video Placement Worldwide

VPW is the nation's leading distributor of sponsored educational video-based programs. Visit their web site at [\[www.vpw.com\]](http://www.vpw.com) to learn more about the organization and review their titles. More than 150,000 teachers have registered with VPW and are using free materials sponsored by business, government and associations. Suggested videos include:

- Mowing Rules from the Outdoor Power Equipment Association about using outdoor power equipment safely.
- Breaking the Code from the National Science Foundation about genetic engineering of food crops.

- Sunkist: Growing the Future from Sunkist Growers, Inc., about how Sunkist citrus gets from the grove to the grocery stores and restaurants around the world.

For more information contact Edith Kravitz via e-mail [\[edith@vpw.com\]](mailto:edith@vpw.com) or by phone, 813-633-9710.

Specially for Teachers

Here are several web sites geared toward teachers.

- [\[www.fisheries.org/publications/catalogs/x55026.shtml\]](http://www.fisheries.org/publications/catalogs/x55026.shtml) This site offers for sale the “Guide to Fisheries Education Resources for Grades K-12” published in 1998 for \$16. This guide focuses on fisheries content rather than on specific educational objectives and evaluates different resources teachers can use to meet their fisheries and aquatic needs.
- [\[www.epa.gov/teachers/\]](http://www.epa.gov/teachers/) This is the environmental educator center from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The site offers curriculum resources on watersheds and ecosystems.
- [\[www.marine-ed.org/\]](http://www.marine-ed.org/) Join the National Marine Educators Association to receive their journal and meet other teachers with whom to exchange ideas, experiences, teaching techniques and to discuss the latest research. The organization also has regional chapters.

Beginning Farmer Rancher Site

With financial support from The Farm Credit System Foundation, Inc., *Successful Farming* magazine has launched a new web site for young and beginning farmers and ranchers. Check it out at [\[www.agriculture.com/future\]](http://www.agriculture.com/future).

Washington Leadership Conference

Start planning your trip to D.C.! The dates for this year's conference are: June 1-6, June 8-13, June 15-20, June 22-27, July 6-11 and July 13-18. Prices for the conference have increased and are as follows: student package \$550; advisor double \$585; advisor single \$780; advisor guest \$975; room-only package \$475. This year's conference will consist of high levels of service learning, mentoring and volunteerism strategies, problem-solving skills, relationship-building skills and character development. The FFA premier leadership conference is shaping up to be the best yet! You should have recently received information for WLC via the mail. For more information, send an e-mail message to wlc@ffa.org, visit www.ffa.org/programs/conferences/html/conf_uhtm or call 317-802-4312.

Agriscience Student of the Year

The Agriscience Student of the Year is one of the more lucrative award programs that FFA has to offer. In recent years, participation in this area has been on the decline, while participation in the Agriscience Fair has continued to set new records. Please encourage students involved in agriscience at the state level to consider entering their project in the student of the year category. Every state winner receives a \$500 scholarship, and the top two from each state are considered for national participation. The national winner receives \$5,000 in scholarship money, the largest scholarship opportunity in FFA award programs. In 2003, only eight states submitted applications. Applications are due to the National FFA Center postmarked by July 15. For more information, visit www.ffa.org/programs/ag-sci/index.htm.

Agriscience Teacher of the Year

Participation in the Agriscience Teacher of the Year program has also been on the decline. Every state winner is entitled to \$100, and the national finalists receive \$500 and a \$1,500 grant for their chapter. The National FFA Organization would like to receive an application from every state. Please encourage teachers involved with agriscience to take advantage of this great opportunity. Applications for the Teacher of the Year are due to the National FFA Center postmarked by July 15. For further assistance in this area, please send an e-mail message to agriscience@ffa.org or call 317-802-4262.

Calling all Collegiate FFA Chapters

Planning is in process to start a monthly Collegiate FFA e-mail that will provide many valuable updates for your collegiate chapter. If you and your students are interested in joining this listserv, please submit your name, e-mail information and any content ideas that you may have to Kristy Miller, program coordinator of Collegiate Services, kmiller@ffa.org, 317-802-4220.

International Teacher Opportunities

Competitive scholarships are available for agriculture teachers to participate in an international experience through EARTHWATCH. The scholarships are available for use in 2004. EARTHWATCH Institute promotes sustainable conservation of our natural environments and cultural heritage by creating partnerships among scientists, the general public, educators and businesses. Expeditions take place year around throughout the world. Participants can receive up to \$1,500 scholarships to cover a portion of the expedition

costs plus membership to EARTHWATCH. To learn more about the expeditions available, visit www.earthwatch.org.

Scholarship applications are available online at www.ffa.org/programs/global/. Please call 317-802-4309 for more information.

National FFA President Recovering

National FFA President Javier Moreno of Puerto Rico was hospitalized January 19 for injuries sustained in an automobile accident that occurred as he was driving to his host family's home in Pennsylvania. Javier suffered serious injuries to his ankles and knees.

For approximately five weeks, Javier has been resting and recovering at home in Pennsylvania. With both of his legs in casts, he is getting around fairly well with the help of a wheelchair and walker. The cast on his left leg has been removed. It may be the beginning of April before the cast on the right leg is taken off. Javier is looking forward to traveling soon and being back with FFA members.

The National FFA Organization thanks all for the many expressions of support for Javier and his family. Cards or letters of support for Javier may be sent to his attention at the National FFA Center. They will be forwarded to him based on his current location. Updates on his progress will be provided as they are available and as appropriate.

Please send cards to: Javier Moreno, National FFA Center, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960.

National FFA Board Meets with Sclafani



During the January National FFA Board of Directors meeting in Washington, D.C., the board had the opportunity to meet with Susan Sclafani, counselor to the U.S. Secretary of Education and acting assistant secretary Office of Vocational and Adult Education. From left to right: C. Coleman Harris, Elaine Lewis, Nancy Trivette, Anne Knapke, Steve Zimmerman, Casey Hogan, Dr. Larry Case, Susan Sclafani, Kent Boggs, Christy Windham, Dr. Steve Harbtreit, Christine Berry, Amy Rasmussen, William "Buddy" Deimler, Lacho Garza, James Woodard and Marion Fletcher.



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in April. It will feature stories
about biotechnology, as well as
provide teaching resources
and FFA news.