

Golden Slate

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The Official Newsletter of the California Agricultural Teachers' Association

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Articles should be e-mailed to cata@calagteachers.org.

If you cannot submit the article electronically, please be sure your material is typed, double-spaced. Advertisements, graphics and forms must be camera-ready. ☼

Sacramento Scene

Size of Budget Hole Exceeds Pessimistic Forecast

By Jim Aschwanen, CATA Executive Director

Regular readers of this column probably know that I am not what you would call an "eternal optimist," especially when it comes to the ability of those in Sacramento to effectively recognize and deal with pressing problems in a thoughtful, timely manner. I have often questioned the wisdom, if not the sanity, of those who purport to "serve the people" of California while they dither, procrastinate and pontificate for weeks, months and years while we sink ever further into an economic abyss.

Call me a pessimist, a downer or just plain cranky, I'm still a little proud of the fact that my consistently negative predications have been far more accurate than the Pollyanna scenarios painted by various policy wonks as they covered up, papered over and in some cases, completely ignored reality.

Deficit

Well, I have a confession to make — the streak is over. That's right folks, I got it wrong. I am now guilty of being an (OMG) optimist! Even I couldn't predict how screwed up and out of whack our state budget would become. You see, back when this budget was passed, lots of people in Sacramento were quietly suggesting that by June 30, 2011 the potential deficit could rise as high as \$7 billion or \$8 billion.

Given my pessimistic nature, I thought a more realistic figure would be in the neighborhood of \$14 billion-\$15 billion. Call me cranky, but I believed that a 100 percent increase in the "screw up" factor was reasonable, given the past performance of our state leadership.

The reality is that we are now facing an announced deficit of at least \$21 billion by the end of the upcoming fiscal year, and that's without creating a single new program or increasing the expenditures within existing programs. \$21 billion — I have been humbled....

Now I know some of you are wondering how our esteemed leaders will react to this new crisis, and what impact their actions will have on students, programs and services in Cali-

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Officers' Corner

Be Prepared... Arm Yourself

By Darol Fishman, CATA President-Elect

We are in the midst of one of the worst economic sieges ever...EVER! In order to protect your home and your "family," you must be prepared to do what it takes to keep your classes and program in place. Your classes may be the only Career Technical Education (CTE) left intact after the marauders have come through and pillaged your school. This means many different things to many different people within the profession, but you and your colleagues must make the decisions as to what it is within your own ranks at your local district that will allow you to survive the attacks.

We have all been to CATA meetings, and have heard our executive director talk about keeping your Advisory Committee in place and informed on the happenings at all levels of education so they can be armed with the best ammunition available in the event you need to call in reinforcements. If you don't think this works, just ask the folks at Atwater where Jim was asked to fire a few volleys in the direction of their advisory committee and when it was over, the superintendent made a bee-line to him to bend his ear for more information regarding CTE and the

success it fosters in our students.

Educate Community

Not only must your Advisory Committee be educated, the local community must be as well, because your committee isn't going to reach everybody even though its makeup is supposed to. The community needs to know what is going on in your program... period.

Articles to the local paper are an excellent way of getting this done along with pictures, as most of them will print what you send along with digital

photographs. Our local paper is difficult to work with because if it doesn't deal with a gang shooting or social tragedy, it usually won't make print. Ours has even nixed the "Agriculture" section even though the only economic sector that is driving our county right now is agriculture. Don't forget about your local Farm Bureau or other groups that publish a monthly newsletter or paper.

Articles pertaining to your students' activities are important, but don't forget about *your* activities as well. Sum-

mer Conference, regional meetings, and Mid-Winter Institute for you community college instructors all fit the bill to provide for a quality program. Articles about events are great, but don't be afraid to write a commentary on the current state of education. Information can be just the ammunition to hit them right between the eyes so the public can start asking the questions about why things are going the way they are. Before you fire a shot, make sure your facts and figures are

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Sacramento Scene

Size of Budget Hole Exceeds Pessimistic Forecast

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fornia. Here's the short answer — no one knows. As we face the start of a new budget cycle with the release of the Governor's budget this month, we should get some idea of the direction that will be taken to close this gap.

Given that this is the last year of the Schwarzenegger administration and an election year, many believe that we will continue to borrow money and use it to paper over these deficits, leaving the mess to the next governor and new members of the Legislature to solve. As this process evolves, we'll keep you posted. Hang in there folks....
Race to the Top

In other news, the battle over Race to the Top legislation was very entertaining to watch during the special session in December. The Senate version, favored by the Governor's Of-

fice, was refused passage by the Assembly after a very nasty fight in the Education and Appropriations committees. As this edition of the SLATE goes to press, there is a standoff between the Governor, who has vowed to veto the Assembly bill, and the members of the Education Coalition, who have loaded up the Assembly version with provisions loathed by the Governor. It also pits the Education Coalition against the equally powerful EdVoice organization, staunch supporters of the Senate version of RTTT legislation. All in all, a very high stakes battle that will greatly influence the acquisition and spending of federal RTTT monies. It's been quite a show!

Conventions

Finally, I would like to recognize and congratulate all of the members of the Ag Educa-

tion family who represented California so admirably at the National FFA and NAAE Conventions this past fall. Special kudos to Jessica Weisbart from Buena Park for being named Outstanding Middle/Secondary Program and to Shay Hopper-Williams from Tulare for being recognized as Outstanding Young Member at the NAAE National Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. It's certainly gratifying to see our outstanding programs and members recognized at the national level for the exceptional work they do in helping students achieve success. More of our members need to follow their example and get those award applications filled out so that others can learn about the great things you do in your programs as well. Again, congratulations to Jessica and Shay!

Hope you had a relaxing and rewarding holiday season. See you at your Spring Regional meetings! ❁

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Teacher Educator News

The UC Davis Report

By Lynn Martindale, Teacher Supervisor, UC Davis

The University of California System has been in the news lately, but for all the wrong reasons. Employee furloughs, increase in student fees, which will be levied in two stages. The UC Office of the President blames these measures on a decrease in the funding from the state legislature.

Beginning in the winter/spring 2010, undergraduates and graduate professional school students will see an increase of 15 percent or \$585. Fees for graduate academic students will rise 2.6 percent, totaling \$111. All students will see an additional 15 percent increase or \$1,334 beginning summer 2010. The UC Regents also approved increases in professional school fees, ranging from \$280 to \$5,696.

Applications Up

The UC unrest and publicity did not seem to affect the number of applications that were received by UC Davis and the system.

"UC reports that UC Davis

UC unrest and publicity did not seem to affect the number of applications received by UC Davis and the system.

has received 43,019 freshman applications, a 2.5 percent (+938) increase in comparison to 42,081 who applied for fall 2009, and a whopping 11,190 transfer applications (+2,268), a 25.5 percent increase over the 8,922 for fall 2009; we received a record total of 54,209 applications. As a system, UC received 100,270 unduplicated freshman applications, an overall 2.4 percent increase (97,935 in fall 2009), and 33,309 transfer applications, a 31.1

percent increase over the 28,615 received for fall 2009." —Dar Hunter, UC Admissions

Program Cutbacks

How does all this affect the agricultural education program? Well, we have had to cut one adjunct lecturer position this year, a position that allowed Jerry Delsol from Woodland High School to teach our credential students about the integration of scientific standards into agricultural contents. We have also cut back

on travel for the year, and our smaller classes are under scrutiny by upper administration. The overseas study program, funded by an endowment, has been put on hold because we are unsure about the return on the investment of the endowment.

Like all educational programs in California, we are concerned about the future. Ending on a positive note, there are applications for the Agricultural Education Credential Program for the 2010-11 school year and the undergraduate major Agricultural and Environmental Education continues to grow, which is positive outlook for the future. ☼

Officers' Corner

Be Prepared... Arm Yourself

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accurate and from a reliable source, and cite facts...not personal opinion... because you may get some debate you don't want blowing up in your face.

Evaluate Curriculum

Keep your compound in order by making sure your students are being presented with relevant and up-to-date skills and activities that keep them actively engaged in the process. I know I'm preaching to the choir here, but evaluate your curriculum as soon as you are done with a unit and reload your magazine with fresh ammo while it is still fresh in your mind. There are reasons we don't teach leatherwork in ag mechanics anymore and you need to determine if it's important to your clientele or important to you.

My roots are in ag mechanics and I always question the instruction of rope work in the curriculum. Basic knots are great...a bowline, a truckers hitch, and square knot...but to have all students make a rope halter is a bit outdated as most of them will have no idea what it is for or how to use it. However, incorporating basic rope work into a unit that also includes load straps and binding chains makes things much more relevant and current. Will these get a student a job because they can secure a load? Most likely not, but he or she is a better employee if the load of ordinance gets to its destination without falling off the truck.

Stay Clean, Organized

Perception becomes reality... period! Keep your firing range and reloading bench

clean and organized so the public sees it as a viable, worthwhile program for their children to be involved in. Keep the shop clean and orderly, keep weeds out of the OH garden area, and the school farm must follow current practices used in industry to keep down dust, weeds, and insects. Get rid of those small engine blocks that were there before the last ag teacher hired on. Clean up the barrels full of twine and trash. Don't take in that load of pipe someone wants to "donate" because there are reasons they want to "donate" it... they're cleaning up and you are much closer than the county dump.

I realize much of this can be difficult to do, but fighting for your program is much easier to do when it looks like it's in order and viable and people

aren't asking "What the hell are they doing there?" Don't be afraid to contact local businesses and growers to work with you on these issues — you might be surprised at what you get by just asking.

We have a minefield to navigate through right now and information and appearance are our best allies... provided your administration has bought into what is going on in your program and supports your efforts.

The last thing you want to have happen is for them to get their hands on a Saturday Night Special and put you and your program in their sights. I am a believer in the Second Amendment and some may argue I have "too many guns." In the situation we are in right now, one can *never* have "too many guns." ☼

Teacher Educator News

Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo Update

By Bill Kellogg, Professor and Head, Agricultural Education and Communication Department

This fall the final phase of Poly Canyon Village opened for students. With the addition of another 1,700 new beds, Cal Poly has the largest on-campus residency of all California State University (CSU) campuses, with 6,436 students living on campus. Ninety-eight percent of freshmen currently live on campus. The new housing complex is absolutely beautiful, and offers students a wonderful living arrangement, complete with a pool, Peet's Coffee, Jamba Juice and sporting complex. Needless to say, on-campus housing does not look the same as when you attended college! As a result of the increased number of students living on campus, several campus improvements have taken place. These include closing roads to through traffic, the addition of new bus stops, and certainly more bicycles moving about campus.

Staffing

We are fortunate, that even in these tough economic times for the CSU, the department was able to fill all of our faculty positions for the 2009-10 academic year. *Bob Cummings* and *Jerry Clark* were hired as lecturers. Besides their teaching responsibilities, Cummings has direct oversight for the New Professionals Institute, Student Teacher Conclave and the Agriskills Institute, while Clark has assumed leadership as the department's student teacher coordinator.

Dr. Wendy Warner left at the end of fall quarter to assume a tenure track faculty position at North Carolina State University.

Larry Shuklian has been hired to work in the department for winter and spring quarters. Many of you know Larry from his nearly 30 years of high school teaching experience, and serving as a "Teacher in Residence" in our department for five years. We look forward to completing the hiring process for replacing the tenure

track member in our department. The position will begin in fall 2010.

Student Teachers

This year, 21 student teachers will earn their Single Subject- Agriculture and Ag Specialist credentials at Cal Poly. Our fall student teachers included *Alissa Sarvinski*, *Ann Sobrato* (Morgan Hill), *Myndi Krafft*, cooperating teacher; *Heather Clement*, *Carpinteria*, *John Avila*, cooperating teacher; *Jennifer McKenry*, *Dinuba*, *Christine Henderson*, cooperating teacher; *Lindsay Walsh*, *Hilmar*, *Marc Coleman*, cooperating teacher; *Katy Teixeira*, *Hughson*, *Kelly Larson*, cooperating teacher; *Joey Silva*, *Le Grand*, *Danny Silva*, cooperating teacher; *Holly Smith*, *Lemoore*, *Howard Clarke*, cooperating teacher; *Megan Rietkerk*, *Santa Maria*, *Luis Guerra*, cooperating teacher; *Jessica Forster*, *San Luis Obispo*, *Jodi Evans*, cooperating teacher; *Cesar Lopez*, *Shandon*, *Deanna Cargill*, cooperating teacher; and *Chris Lemos*, *Templeton*, *Chris Hildebrand*, cooperating teacher. Our spring student teachers include *Tiffany Raffaelli*, *Hughson*, *Kelly Larson*, cooperating teacher; *Kelly Orosco*, *Pitman* (Turlock), *Jake Dunn*, cooperating teacher; *Mark Powell*, *Hilmar*, *Marc Coleman*, cooperating teacher; *Katie Wortman*, *Los Banos*, *Jason Bretz*, cooperating teacher; *Shannon Aguilar*, *Orestimba* (Newman), *Lauren Stroud*, cooperating teacher; *Felipe Barrientos*, *North Salinas*, *Stan Uchiyama*, cooperating teacher; *Amanda Rodriguez*, *San Luis Obispo*, *Jodi Evans*, cooperat-

ing teacher; *Heather Hansen*, *Templeton*, *Chris Hildebrand*, cooperating teacher, *Patrick Frazier*, *Foothill* (Bakersfield), *Ralph Mendes*, cooperating teacher; and *Patrick Smith*, *Mariposa County High School*, *Wayne Forsythe*, cooperating teacher. We wish to thank our cooperating schools for mentoring the student teachers through their student teaching experiences! As you meet these new teachers, please make an extra effort to welcome them into our profession.

Campus Enrollment

Like all California State University (CSU) campuses, the CSU Chancellor's Office has requested that Cal Poly reduce in-state enrollment for the 2010-11 academic year. This will be accomplished by accepting fewer students in the fall, placing tighter constraints on students on academic probation, and working hard to get our "Super Seniors" graduated by June 2010.

These reductions should not have an impact on our ability to accept credential candidates; however, like all campuses, our ability to accept students into our master's degree program has been affected. Currently, candidates interested in applying for the master's degree program are encouraged to apply for fall quarter. Under CSU requirements, applications for the master's degree program are being accepted only fall quarter. Candidates in the "pipeline" who desire to complete their master's degree in the 2010-11 school year must apply for fall quarter.

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News and Views

So You Want to Be a Veterinarian?

By Neal Spiro, D.V.M., Assistant Professor of Animal Science, CSU Fresno
Steven Rocca, Assistant Professor of Agricultural Education, CSU Fresno

Have you ever sat through a State FFA Degree ceremony and noticed the large number of students whose career goal is to become a veterinarian? This comes as no surprise though, since as agriculture teachers we spend a great deal of time encouraging students to pursue professional careers in agriculture and whenever people think of animal-oriented careers, veterinarian typically tops the list.

Agriculture teachers are experts at nurturing and cultivating students' career interests and they're rightfully proud when their students express an interest in such an honorable and prestigious vocation as a veterinarian. But eventually, reality sets in, which is when we realize that it's impossible for all of these students to achieve their career goal.

So, in hopes of providing you with some sound advice and helpful information to better prepare your enthusiastic students for the reality of their career planning, I've partnered up with a professional to provide some help.

Dr. Neal Spiro, D.V.M.,

teaches our pre-veterinary orientation class at Fresno State and advises students in our pre-veterinary program. He is certainly passionate about his profession and encourages young people to pursue their dream to become veterinarians, but only after ensuring that they completely understand the challenge they face.

Here are Dr. Spiro's own observations and advice for you to pass along to your students so that they will be better prepared should they decide to pursue a veterinary career.

Where to Start?

The veterinary profession offers many diverse and rewarding career opportunities.

Job opportunities for new veterinarians range from traditional small animal, large animal or mixed type practices to specialization in one of 20 recognized veterinary specialty organizations, regulatory medicine, research, military service, food safety and public health.

The American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) maintains a website (www.aavmc.org) with a wealth of information for prospective veterinary students to explore these opportunities. This website facilitates the application process, providing a single source for many veterinary school entry requirements, statistical data, cost breakdowns,

and complete veterinary school annual costs. This site is very beneficial and should be a required site to visit for any high school student considering a career in the veterinary field.

Getting Into Vet School

Each veterinary school has its own specific entry requirements, which can be found at the AAVMC website. Most Californians set their sights on admission to UC Davis, whose requirements are similar to most veterinary schools across the nation.

Students must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 (out of 4.0), passing score on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), minimum of 180 hours of veterinary work

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Teacher Educator News

Cal Poly- San Luis Obispo Update

(Continued from page 4)

Award Winners

We are pleased to report that two of our students, Nick Traini and Olivia Gonzales, competed in the California Young Farmers and Ranchers' Collegiate Discussion Meet in Anaheim at the California Farm Bureau annual meeting. Olivia earned first place, and will compete at the national competition in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in February representing California. She is the third Cal Poly student in recent years to win the statewide competition. Her coaches were Scott Vernon and Richard Gearhart.

Record Applications

Cal Poly recorded its largest applicant pool in university history with 40,904 students

submitting undergraduate applications this year. We received 33,651 applications from first-time freshmen, which is up 6.8 percent from last year's 31,480 apps; and 7,273 upper division transfers, up 40 percent from last year's 5,185.

Learn by Doing Endowment

At our Alumni Luncheon held in June during the CATA Summer Conference, 77 alumni made a five-year pledge or gave money to establish a \$10,000 "Learn by Doing" endowment within the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences. This endowment will provide direct support to helping Cal Poly to provide practical hands-on experiences for our students for years to come. Our alumni

were the first in the college to partner with the dean's office to fund a "Learn by Doing" endowment. We thank those who gave in support of future Cal Poly students.

CATA Summer Conference

We are looking forward to hosting the 2010 CATA Summer Conference. Watch for the first "Call to Conference" and respond to the registration as quickly as possible. As you know, many activities fill up quickly. Our ability to meet your needs during conference is many times dictated by the registration totals. Reserve your spots earlier, and you won't be disappointed.

New President for Cal Poly

After 30 years of service as the campus president, Dr. War-

ren J. Baker will be retiring from his post at the university. His retirement will be effective after a successor takes over the position.

The CSU chancellor indicated the CSU Board of Trustees will conduct a search for a successor. The search is expected to be completed by the middle of 2010. Under President Baker's leadership, the university has consistently earned national recognition for excellence.

Clearly his leadership will be missed, and it is our hope that we will again have a president who will follow in the footsteps of Dr. Baker that supports agricultural education in California, the Future Farmers of America and the CATA. ☘

News and Views

So You Want to Be a Veterinarian?

(Continued from page 5)

experience and complete a core of classes consisting of one year of biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, physics, English composition and humanities, as well as courses in genetics, statistics, physiology, microbiology and biochemistry. Completing a B.S. or B.A. is not required prior to veterinary school admittance. Students must meet the minimum requirements; however, these minimums do little to address the reality or the competitiveness of veterinary school admittance.

Excellent Grades!

The number one selection criterion veterinary schools use to screen applicants is grades, plain and simple. Students must be made aware of this early on. Remember this: C's get degrees, but A's get students into veterinary school. The average college GPA for students entering UC Davis' Veterinary School in 2008 was 3.47.

In high school, prospective veterinary students need a solid foundation in math, chemistry and biology. Just taking the courses is not enough, though; they must understand the material and be prepared to compete in fast-paced college courses with other students who desire admittance into professional schools.

A hard-working, animal-loving student with average grades has little to no chance of admittance into veterinary

The number one selection criterion veterinary schools use is grades. Students must be made aware of this early on. Remember this: C's get degrees, but A's get students into veterinary school.

school. Remember, the number one selection criterion is...GRADES!

Required Experience

Veterinary work experience serves many purposes. First, just because someone loves animals does not mean they will enjoy being a veterinarian. As a pre-veterinary student advisor, I can't believe how many students have never worked for or with a veterinarian. Why would you want to dedicate so much school time to a profession you know so little about? Work experience exposes students to the realities of being a veterinarian, good and bad.

Secondly, work experience allows animal handling skills to be developed. Some people are naturals around animals; others need to learn animal behavior and how to effectively and safely restrain animals for examination and treatment.

Third, animals have owners. If someone chooses veterinary medicine because they like animals better than people, think again. People skills are an extremely important veterinary skill. Understanding people and becoming comfortable interacting with them during

stressful situations is invaluable.

Lastly, work experience starts the student's diagnostic training and builds his/her treatment skills.

Vet School Costs

Another area students must be made aware of is the cost to attend veterinary school. For UC Davis, the 2009 resident tuition is \$26,303 and total cost may approach \$50,000 per year. Add this to the student's undergraduate degree costs and you may have a new graduate with more than \$200,000 in debt before they ever start work.

According to the AVMA's survey of first year veterinarians, the average starting salary in 2008 was approximately \$60,000 per year. Eight dedicated years of school, over \$200,000 in debt for a \$60,000-per-year job. That's the reality.

Consider the Alternatives

This harsh reality check isn't to encourage you to crush your student's dream to become a veterinarian. Rather, see this as an opportunity to discuss with your students the facts about veterinary careers and some of the alternative careers for students working with animals.

You may ask if they have considered a career as an animal nurse or Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT) who work hand in hand with veterinarians. They have become an essential part of the modern small animal clinic. There are also all the traditional production agriculture careers in dairy, beef, swine and sheep production. In the equine industry, there are career opportunities in breeding and training programs and also non-traditional careers such as human therapeutic riding programs.

Additional animal-related jobs exist at zoos, animal shelters, and in animal-assisted therapy programs. There is a very long list of career options to consider once your students look past the popular choice of veterinarian.

We hope this article has provided you with some valuable information so that when you do inspire a student to become a veterinarian, you can share with them a vivid picture of the challenge they face. Most important, we hope you have the information needed to prepare those students so that they will face that challenge with all the tools necessary.

If you or your students need additional information or assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us so that we can help your students as they make their important college and career decisions: srocca@csufresno.edu or nspiro@csufresno.edu. ☼

Corporate Membership

Corporate Membership 2009-2010

Our Corporate Members are listed with a brief description of their products on the next few pages.

We encourage your patronage of our Corporate Members, as they have shown a commitment to supporting agricultural education in California. If you are aware of any others who may be interested in this type of membership, call (916) 714-2970 or e-mail cata@calagteachers.org so we may send pertinent information. ☼

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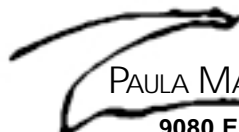


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News and Views

What Is the Next Step?

By Hugh Mooney, Consultant, California Department of Education

It is hard to believe that I have been a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) for two years. For those of you who have been around for a few years you remember past GOLDEN SLATE articles that I have authored related to NAAE. Regardless of the topic of the article I write, many have shared with me that they enjoyed my part of the GOLDEN SLATE. Often my article will pose a question — this one is no exception. Should I take the next step?

Context

To set the context for this discussion, let me inform those of you new to the profession and remind those of you who have been at it for a while how we got to this point. During the time that I was moving through the state CATA chairs, we had serious discussions among the Governing Board members and the membership at the state conference related to the level of involvement of CATA with NAAE. A decision was made to try to get a member elected to the Board.

After several years of building relationships, in 2007 I was elected to the NAAE Board of Directors for a three-year term. My term ends at the NAAE convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, December 1-4, 2010.

Next Step?

Having served as a member of the Board, I am eligible to run for the office of president-elect. If I were to be elected, it would be another three-year commitment (president-elect, president, past-president). That brings me back to the question: Should I take the next step? Should I run for president-elect of NAAE?

I am looking for more than a yes or no response. I want to know the reason you think that I should become a candidate or not. I would also like to hear some suggestions that could become goals for NAAE to achieve.

It is always easy to identify things that people or organizations are not achieving. It is another to identify a better way to do things.

Accomplishments

I have had the opportunity to share in some very positive accomplishments of California teachers who are members of

I am looking for more than a yes or no response. I want to know the reason you think that I should become a candidate or not. I would also like to hear goals for NAAE to achieve.

NAAE. I was there when Kris Elliott received the Outstanding Young Member award. That was in Las Vegas the year I was elected to the Board.

The next year I had the honor of presenting Howard Lewis and Cosumnes River College the Award for the Outstanding Post-Secondary Program.

This year I again had the honor of presenting awards to California teachers. Jessica Weisbart won the Outstanding Secondary Program award for the work she has done developing the program at Buena Park. Shay Williams-Hopper won the Outstanding Young Member award.

I have also gotten to know many teachers from Region 1. The outlook, work ethic and attitude that are prevalent in California are found in teachers throughout the Region. I believe that the relationship between those states (Arizona, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Utah) and California has improved because of our increased involvement.

I want to thank those of you who have paid your NAAE dues over the years. California's membership has grown to become the largest state membership in our region. This year for the first time, California's membership is greater than Washington's.

Of course I should point out that we have more than three

times the number of teachers in California. Washington has more than 90 percent of its teachers as members. California has slightly more than 25 percent of our teachers as members of NAAE.

Personal Liability Insurance

Last summer at the CATA Conference many of you visited with me at the NAAE

booth about one of the benefits of membership, the \$1 million of personal liability insurance that comes with membership.

If you do not have personal liability insurance, you should seriously consider joining just for the insurance. I hope that we can continue to increase California's membership in NAAE. There is influence in numbers.

After reading this article, I hope that you will reflect on your opinion of benefits and shortcomings of NAAE. Then give me a call or send me an e-mail to share your thoughts. hmooney@cde.ca.gov or (916) 319-0488. ☞

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News and Views

In Agricultural Education Many of the Pressing Issues Remain the Same, But It Is No Longer a 'Boys Club'

By Lynn Martindale, Teacher Supervisor, UC Davis

In 1986, I began my teaching career in agricultural education; little did I know that I was entering a field where there were very few women. I was quickly made aware that I was entering into a "boys club" when I attended the first Tulare-Kings sectional meeting in fall 1986 and was asked by John Silvia "how long I thought I would last before I would get pregnant and quit."

My response: "I will be around to see YOU retire." That one comment stuck with me, and made me think about what I needed to do to be part of the "boys club" and thus my challenge began. I did not really know the extent to which the boys dominated membership until I attended my first San Joaquin regional meeting and found only three other women in the audience.

Today, there are usually more women than men at the sectional and regional meetings. Over the past 25 years many things have changed, but those who came before us have laid the path for what we appreciate today in agricultural education.

Male-Dominated Field

In 1986, 65.5 percent of all the high school teachers were female, but not in vocational agriculture; it was a field dominated by men. In 1975, California credentialed 90 males (85 percent), 15 (15 percent) females in vocational education.

Only 10 years later, by 1984, the statistics had changed: 30 (54 percent) males, 25 (46 percent) females were credentialed in agricultural education.

Traditionally, it was not considered appropriate for a woman to major in agriculture, let alone teach agriculture, according to *Profile of Vocational Agriculture Teachers, Trends in Number, Sex, Preparation and Satisfaction of Credential Recipients* by Orville Thompson, Virgil L. Palmer III, Rhonda Fisher Eaker and Douglas B. Gwynn.

This does make sense, since women were not recognized as part of the FFA membership until 1969, so the first college graduates to receive credentials in vocational agriculture in California would have been around 1973 (Jean Landeen, Cindy Brown, Kristi Mattes, Mary Beth Hearn and a transplant from Colorado, Christine Dickson). Was it only four years to get a credential then?

1984 Profile

The 1984 *Profile of Vocational Agriculture Teachers* report addressed the numbers entering the profession of vocational agriculture nationally, as well as in California, the longevity and success in the profession. According to the report, after men and women were placed, there was only a small difference in the longevity.

Nationally, it was not the gender that made the difference in longevity. Findings showed that 23 percent quit or changed schools after the first year on the job because of dissatisfaction. In California, the results were similar: 60 males and 60 females were interviewed; 69.3 percent were married, 27.5 percent were single and 4.2 percent were divorced. A majority was between the ages of 27-32; the youngest was 24; the oldest being 63 years old.

In Oct. 1985, a GOLDEN SLATE article "Are You a Teacher of Teachers?" encouraged each teacher to identify at least one student to pursue a teaching career, promoting the concept of providing students with actual teaching experiences so we would replace ourselves.

Why did they leave the profession in 1984? Of the 24 who left the profession, 30 percent (8) left because their programs were cut, 20 percent (5) left because of the time commitment, 8 percent (2) left because of pay, and 46 percent (9) left for various other reasons, including returning to school, feeling inadequate for the jobs, difficulty with school admin-

istration (Thompson et al., 1984).

The reasons for entering vocational agriculture in 1984 were: because of the influence of the voc ag teacher (33.3 percent); college ag teacher (15 percent); the rest included reasons such as "wanted to improve agriculture" (8.3 percent); desire to teach young people (6.7 percent); peers (4.2 percent); and others for miscellaneous reasons.

Longevity Issue

Why does this matter? It matters because in the 23 years I have been in agricultural education, I have heard many reasons for young teachers leaving the profession, mainly women leaving because they are beginning families. As far back as 1985, when the profession was predominantly male, only 34 percent of the credentialed agricultural education teachers were still in the high school classroom after 10 years. Of those who remained in the profession, 65 percent were female, while only 53 percent of the males (Thompson, et al., 1984).

Thus, longevity has been an ongoing issue for agricultural education and education in general. And it is interesting to note women stayed longer than men; a common misconception even today.

Does the statement "replace yourself; find one student to go into agricultural education so that you can be replaced" sound familiar? It should; it has been said since even before 1985. In October 1985, a GOLDEN SLATE article "Are You a Teacher of Teachers?" encouraged each teacher to identify at least one student to pursue a teaching career, and promoted the concept of providing students with actual teaching experiences so that we would replace ourselves. With the experiences offered to students in agricultural education classes, we need to also offer mentoring to those who are considering and entering the profession.

A teacher who has done an outstanding job of replacing himself is Jerry Delsol of Woodland. He has been teaching for 27 years and has 12 of his past students teaching agriculture education today. Now that is impressive!

Resources

As far as available resources for programs, agricultural programs are faring well. The Agricultural Vocational Incentive

(Continued on page 13)

But It Is No Longer a ‘Boys Club’

(Continued from page 12)

Grant Program was initiated in 1983 with the passage of SB 187 and subsequent passage of state funds of \$3 million. At that time, the legislative intent was to assist and improve secondary vocational agriculture programs in California.

Today, with sometimes excessive accountability measures, can your department stand up to the scrutiny? The Incentive Grant focused on three important areas:

- ✓ the academics in the classroom related to agriculture;
- ✓ developing leadership skills for *all* students in your program; and
- ✓ giving all students an experiential learning experience through SAE.

Key Findings

A *Brain Compatible Learning* article by Jane McGeehan on brain-compatible learning focuses on key brain research findings:

- ✓ emotion is the gatekeeper to learning;
- ✓ intelligence is a function of experience; and
- ✓ the brain stores most effectively what is meaningful from the learner’s perspective.

Agricultural education provides students with the feeling of acceptance in the integral agricultural activities, academics in the classroom that incorporates relevant and meaningful activities based on the academics outside of the classroom via the FFA and SAE opportunities.

In 1940, the U.S. Office of Education wrote: “more and more, teachers and others are recognizing that instruction in agriculture becomes genuinely vocational to the degree that experiences are provided in the types to thought and action which lead to the development of abilities needed for success in a given type of farming.”

We may not be preparing students to go into farming much

anymore, but are we providing our students with skills that are transferable to other areas of their lives?

Assessment

At UC Davis we are looking back at our students who have entered the profession and asking ourselves: Are they ready for the academic rigor of the classroom? Do they have dedication of developing leaders? Do they have the right kind of background experiences to supervise students’ projects? In addition to these questions, we have assessed the longevity of UC Davis in agricultural education teachers in the profession.

Table 1 [below] presents a few statistics describing UC Davis teachers and the program since 2003-04.

As we review the data, we are heartened to see the retention of our students in agricultural education and know that they will soon be “replacing themselves.” As we look back at the 30-year snapshot discussed in this article, some things may have changed, but many of the pressing issues remain the same.

‘Replace Yourself’

As you “replace yourself,” seek out a future teacher who can provide students with a classroom that is academically rigorous, agricultural-based projects (SAE), and leadership opportunities (FFA).

In the future, based on what researchers are beginning to understand about the way people actually learn, our educational delivery system (focusing on the development of the whole person) will be held up as a model.

To make certain that agricultural education remains viable, we will need to continue to “replace ourselves” with new teachers. It up to you to encourage top quality students to enter the profession of teaching and the best way to do this is to lead by example and inspire young people to join the ranks of teachers of agricultural education. ☞

Table 1. UC Davis Agricultural Education Program Statistics

Percent	Indicator
11%	Of 290 agricultural education teachers credentialed from 2003-2009, percent of the total from UC Davis
87%	UC Davis teachers remaining in the teaching profession
70%	UC Davis graduates remaining in agricultural education
61%	UC Davis students who received an M.A. in education
64%	UC Davis females who received credentials (as a percent of the total)
36%	UC Davis males who received credentials (as a percent of the total)
75%	UC Davis female students who are teaching agricultural education
73%	UC Davis male students who are teaching agricultural education
54%	UC Davis students who had FFA experience in high school
77%	UC Davis graduates teaching in the Central Region

News and Views

Meet California FFA Advisor Legend Al DeRose

Golden Slate (GS): What is your philosophy or thoughts about teaching agriculture?

Al DeRose (AD): Agriculture teaching is one of the best professions in the field of agriculture! I look at it as not a job, but as something you love to do and I looked forward to every day going to the classroom.

GS: How did you motivate students?

AD: I set the example by setting goals, having the right attitude and motivating students to achieve their dreams and goals. This is done by being excited about what the students' goals and dreams are and constantly talking about them. If the goal is to win the State FFA Livestock Judging Championship, talk about the "next level," such as seeing themselves competing at the national livestock contest.

When coaching to prepare for the nationals, talk about the team seeing themselves representing the United States at the world contest in Edinburgh, Scotland. Create mutual respect, visualize their success with them and be their best cheerleader.

GS: What is a coach?

AD: A coach is a teacher, parent figure, counselor, businessperson, administrator, community leader, and most importantly a role model for students to look up to and follow.

GS: While a teacher at Atascadero, whom did you ask for help from?

AD: There are key departments at your school that you need to build a relationship and open communication with. To become more effective and have a successful agriculture

department, keep positive relations with your administrators, school board members, secretaries, counselors and the budget personnel. You need to get to know your transportation department, maintenance department, and all the mechanics. They all play an important role in supporting and encouraging the future of your program.

GS: Did the community play a role in the success of your program?

AD: Absolutely! Build an Advisory Committee with local business and agriculture leaders to guide and support your curriculum to make sure you are on the cutting edge. Organize a booster club of parents and supporters from the community to help finance and chaperone the activities and events throughout the year. ☘



Al DeRose, Retired Agriculture Teacher and "FFA Coach" Atascadero High School (1968-2004). DeRose coached 17 state and 7 national FFA championship teams. His students were always extremely competitive at fairs and shows.

PCA Ad

They Don't Know Beans!

By Monica Bianchi, Le Grand FFA

Twenty years ago, I became a vocational ag teacher to help teach students to become independent individuals who would be self sufficient and able to secure a job upon their graduation. Today, our ag science classes have evolved to become the equivalent of a college-level zoology class that is over the heads of 60 percent of our students, so instead of leaving our classes feeling secure and ready to get a job, many students leave scratching their heads wondering why and feeling "below proficient." Our current education system is not meeting the needs of the majority of our students. We need to put the word "vocational" back into our agriculture curriculum so that hands-on skills instruction is the focus.

Teaching Self Reliance

When I show my beginning ag biology students a bag of pinto beans and I ask the question, "alive or not alive," fewer than 20 percent respond "alive." When our high school students growing up in a rural community don't have the correct response with a 100 percent accuracy, that worries me. Every student doesn't need to become a doctor to survive, but every student does need to eat to survive.

We should teach our students to feed themselves and how to become more self-reliant. I don't think the powers in Sacramento or in Washington, D.C. "know beans" about educating students in the 21st century.

Mathematics

To graduate from college, I was required to take two algebra classes. Like many of my students, I was mathematically challenged and soon realized that I did not want to become an engineer. I really feel like two years of my life were wasted trying to teach me a skill I have used only twice in my adult life thus far. The two times that I have had a need for advanced mathematical equations was to figure out a problem in a building construction situation, so I consulted a professional to make sure my calculations were correct.

Our children don't have to be experts in math and science; they need to become good at basic reading, writing and simple mathematics, so they can read the fine print and balance a check book and figure simple interest rates. Our children need to be good communicators so they can under-

stand the issues of the 21st century and make good informed decisions about their future.

Alive or No?

When the same group of high school ag biology students were asked how you can eat a bean, 80 percent respond boiled when they are a dry bean. Once again, less than 20 percent of my student population knows that a young green bean can be eaten raw and that an older green bean can be boiled and stewed with other vegetables. Students don't know beans and apparently we need to be more pro-active in the Department of Education to ensure that such educational lessons become an integral part of our textbooks.

Many simple things that we take for granted aren't often part of the curriculum and they need to be if California hopes to remain the leading state in the production of agriculture. I sincerely believe that we would have less of an illegal immigrant problem if we

would have a greater value for our farm laborers. Often, farm laborers are able to make more money than I can as a teacher and many can afford to take the winters off. Every student does not need to be trained to be a doctor when there are so many valuable vocational jobs needing to be filled. When we as an educational community devalue a fruit picker or a gardener, we set many of our students up for failure.

Vocational Skills Needed

Like many of you, I have often made snide remarks and comments about the Department of Education and the educational consultants who have labeled many of our students "below proficient." If we were teaching more traditional vocational skills, our students would be more successful and our country may not be in the current economic state that it is today.

By labeling a child at the third grade level as "below proficient," the stigma of be-

low average follows them throughout their lifetime and many of my students enter my class saying, "I'm below proficient and I can't do it." There are too few career technical courses being offered under the current system so many students with kinesthetic strengths are being short-changed.

When we allow one of the nation's strongest economic countries to create an educational system that tears down a child instead of building them up, we are doing a terrible injustice. We need to teach our leaders in the Department of Education that a high-powered math and science curriculum forgets to allow room for students with other talents.

If we want a prosperous future in California, we will need to have a strong diversified agriculture community as the foundation of our strength, not just for those who can score well on a math and science-based exam. ❁

Teacher Recruitment Begins at Home in Southern Region



(Left to right) Duane and Casey Penfold (Apple Valley), Kelly (Mountain Empire) and Alyson Tulloch (Warner), Shaina (Heritage) and Terry Leach (El Camino).

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January 14-15	Winter Governing Board	Galt
January 28-29	Student Teacher Conclave	Davis
January 30	Natural Resources State Finals	Reedley College
February 6	Winter State Finals - Citrus, Tree & Vine Pruning	CSU Fresno
February 20	Superior Region Meeting	Oroville
February 22	South Coast Region Meeting	San Luis Obispo
February 27	Central Region Meeting	Stockton
February 27	San Joaquin Region Meeting	Bakersfield
March 27	North Coast Region Meeting	Ukiah
April 10	Southern Region Meeting	Pomona
April 17	CSU Fresno Field Day	CSU Fresno
April 17-20	State FFA Leadership Conference	Fresno
April 21-24	NAAE Region I Meeting	Great Falls, Montana
May 1	State FFA Judging Finals	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 19	Executive Committee Meeting	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 20	Pre-Conference Governing Board	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 20-24	CATA Summer Conference	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 24	Governing Board Summer Retreat	San Luis Obispo

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