



Golden Slate

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Sacramento Scene

Changes Afoot in Capitol, Education Funding

By Jim Aschwanden, CATA Executive Director

The 2012 election season is now behind us, which is a relief to many people tired of the incessant “white noise” of television ads and the avalanche of campaign flyers that bombard us every two years. In California, the net result of this election looks to be a game changer — super-majority status for Democrats in both the Assembly and the Senate. What does that mean? Simply stated, the Democrats can do anything they want on taxes, on the budget, on constitutional amendments, and on ordinary legislation.

New Day

The era of partisan bickering is over, since the Republicans have no power, real or imagined, to stop anything from being enacted in California. It's a new day in Sacramento.

With the Democrats in firm control of both the Legislature and Governor's office, it will be interesting to see how this scenario plays itself out. From the left, we're already hearing calls for increased corporate taxes and a restoration of health and social service programs that were cut in response to the state's previous budget deficits.

More moderate Democrats seem less inclined to join that parade, recognizing that the margin of victory in many swing districts was razor-thin — with the very real possibility that voters won't support ever-increasing tax burdens.

Will the partisan bickering of the past be replaced by a new form of infighting among the various factions of the Democratic Party? Only time will tell. . .

Less Experience

Not only did the Legislature undergo a transformative shift in power, there is also another shift that promises to alter the political scene in Sacramento — a generational change in legislative background and experience. The legislative class of 2012 welcomed a whopping 39 new political freshmen to Sacramento, which is the largest number of freshmen in the state Legislature since 1966.

The passage of Proposition 30, coupled with the results of the 2012 election, creates an interesting dynamic — there is

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Officers' Corner

Oh Pioneer!

By Cindy Rohde, CATA President Elect, Pierce High School

I guess you could say this past summer was bitter sweet for me as we lost my wonderful Uncle Dennis near the end of July. Of course, that's the beginning of harvest time up in Eastern Washington, so following tradition and good manners, his service was held on a sunny day in mid-September when the golden stubble of a good harvest covered the hills and the leaves were starting to turn in the draws. Surrounded by the descendents of the other old Welsh families, living and dead, we laid his ashes down, one of five generations of Williamses to rest in the good ground of the little cemetery on the hill just south of town. Afterwards, in the church basement, we gathered for salads and funeral cake and to listen to all the old stories that bind us through the generations.

Important Things Unchanged

Like other pioneers, my family settled in tiny Almira to raise their families free and strong, to worship in a proper Welsh church, and to bring their wheat to harvest. Through blizzards, droughts and fires, through epidemics, embargos and environ-

mentalists, through recessions, depressions and regulations, and through two "wars to end all wars" and all the wars since, Almira has endured little change. Through it all, the important things have remained the same: family, faith and the harvest.

Ag Education Pioneers

As I sat in the airport in Spokane reflecting on all this and thinking about all the things needing doing at work, I started thinking about the challenges of our Ag Ed pioneers. When they first took their vision "out on the

frontier," they were as likely to teach mule care as tractor mechanics. The ink was barely dry on the creed when the country spiraled into depression.

But through dust bowls and depressions, through two "wars to end all wars" and all the wars since, and through every wacky politician and education reform known to man, Ag Education has endured. Through it all, the important things have remained the same: our Ag Ed family, faith in our mission and our future, and bringing our students to success in agriculture, citizenship and life.

Much like the Welsh pioneers of old, the Ag Ed pioneers succeeded because they were willing to work hard, be thrifty, sacrifice when needed, hold strong to their values, and honor the ties that bound them to each other and to their communities.

New Frontier

Once again, times are hard and likely they'll be harder before
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Sacramento Scene

Changes Afoot in Capitol, Education Funding

(Continued from page 1)

now more money to spend, unfettered power to spend it, and less experience in the legislative body tasked with making those decisions. Should be an interesting sideshow — stay tuned!

Clues in Governor's Budget

Given the new political makeup within the state Legislature, many are looking at the role Governor Jerry Brown will play in shaping and influencing the political process, wondering how far he is willing to go to override the desires of his own party. One of the first indications of his agenda will be the release of his proposed 2013-14 State Budget, due out in early January. We are already hearing that the spending plan will be "controlled" and "austere," but don't have any real details at this point.

Education Funding Overhaul

One of the priorities that we are certain will be contained in the Governor's budget is a continued effort to overhaul current state education funding by implementing a new process called the Weighted Student Formula. This new plan would eliminate virtually all categorical programs in California and would base future school allocations on the number

of English Learners and students enrolled in free or reduced lunch programs within each district.

We have been involved in a series of meetings with administration officials on this issue, and have seen some willingness to at least consider the creation of a "weight" to support the continuation of Career Technical Education programs at the high school level. Whether this results in a workable plan remains to be seen, but it is at least encouraging that the administration is open to discussing the issue.

Ag Education 2030

As we ring in the New Year and begin ramping up for our busy spring season, it's important for all members to know and understand that the CATA organization remains committed to providing the leadership and vision to meet the challenges we face over the next several decades. As this edition of the GOLDEN SLATE goes to print, plans are being finalized for an Ag Education 2030 activity at the FFA Center to begin the process of discussing and considering the future direction of Ag Education in California and the opportunities that may arise for our profession over the next 20+ years. Representatives from each region have been invited to

attend, focusing primarily on the next generation of future leaders within Ag Education.

As part of this ongoing process, every CATA member will have an opportunity to participate in this process at your Spring Regional meetings, and we will continue to include these activities as part of the CATA Summer Conference program. Again, thanks to all of you for all of your valuable input at last year's conference. These are challenging but exciting times for our profession!

FFA Membership Transition

On a final note, we would like to recognize and thank Tina Kloss for her service to Ag Education and the FFA. Tina recently retired as the Membership Services coordinator for FFA, and we wish her all the best. We would like to also welcome Jennifer Stockton into the Ag Ed "family," as Jennifer takes over for Tina at the FFA Center. Many of you probably already know Jennifer, who has spent several years helping run the FFA Store at the State FFA Leadership Conference in Fresno. Welcome aboard, Jennifer!

I hope all of you had a relaxing holiday season and had a chance to spend some quality time with family and friends. See you down the road! ❁

Officers' Corner

Farming Our Community May Yield a Bounty of Rewards

By Mike Albiani, CATA State Secretary

Many of us have a wonderful relationship with our students and their parents. Parents support their children, our programs and schools, supporting the activities and interests of their children and themselves. As agricultural educators, we have the opportunity to farm this interest or to let it lie fallow, never finding out what the yield may be. Just as we would test the soil before planting a crop, it is in all of our interests to test the value of our community supporters before deciding to leave the field in an unproductive state.

Vast Communities

Our communities are vast. They are filled with alumni, parents, and industry representatives who have an interest in helping our students grow and succeed. Many of our programs utilize this support through booster organizations and activities that raise valuable funds, allowing us to expose our students to experiences in which they could not participate without the support.

Such support is a valuable asset to any program and should be managed as we would manage any cash crop — with gratitude and interest, letting those donors and boosters know how valuable their backing is and how it affects the students who we are all working to educate and sustain.

Other Assets

Simply looking at the potential of our communities as fundraisers can cause us to overlook many other valuable assets that could change the success of our chapters as well as decrease the stress that each of us deals with on a daily basis.

In many programs, the community yields judging team

coaches, student mentors, SAE employment sites, and a group of experts who can serve as guest speakers, field trip hosts and consultants for CDE teams and individuals.

Increasing Yields

We cannot all be experts at everything agricultural. Admitting that we have limitations to our knowledge and expertise is the first step in increasing yields. We need to think of our students as a growing crop. Just as we would use a consultant to increase the yield of our crop, we should be working actively in our community to identify and cultivate relationships that will not only build capacity in ourselves, but also increase the success of our students.

As cultivators of tomorrow's agricultural leaders, we need to use every resource available to provide them with the inputs necessary to harvest a bright future.

Nurturing Boosters

In my chapter, we have worked hard in recent years to increase the community involvement in our chapter. We have nurtured

our booster club into an active group of parents who not only support our students financially, but also provide support for teachers and students at local and sectional events as judges, timekeepers and collaborators.

This support has yielded positive results for our section and region. As experts are identified at the local level, their names and abilities can be cultivated to share their talents at the regional and state levels, improving the experience for all members.

Interestingly enough, once the community members know what is happening in your chapter

and the effect you are having on children, they will network to introduce you to others who have an interest in providing your students with an environment to grow and prosper.

As programs grow and the demands on your time are drawn to things like academies, conferences, funding, and finding that balance everyone talks about, your community and the assets it provides will spark the improvement in your farming operation that will cause your future crop of students to exceed all expectations. ☼

The Old Blue CATA Calendar

By Ralph Mendes, CATA State Treasurer,
Kern High School District

I was recently cleaning out my desk to go to a new job and I encountered an entire back half of a drawer stuffed with three rows of small "CATA calendars." There was 27 years' worth of them, to be exact. Some years had two books because I had lost the original CATA calendar that I received at summer conference and had to replace it with two "annual" calendar books, one that ended in December and the next starting in January. Those replacement calendars often would be red or green or some other color besides the original dark blue of the CATA calendar.

There they sat, neatly lined up at the back of my old desk drawer. Some were concave from being carried in the back pocket of my jeans; all had bent corners and torn pages. Almost all had clear packing or duct tape holding the bindings together. If you are under the age of 35 or were never in an agriculture program run by a CATA member when you were in high school, you probably have no idea what I am talking about.

Frequent Use

Clay Freeman does. He is my former teaching partner and remembers them because he was one of my students in the late '80s, and he recalls that I used those

books frequently. As a matter of fact, we found the calendar book for his senior year (1989-90, I think), the year he showed two steers, two lambs, and two pigs at the county fair. And there, on March 17 was a note to "visit Clay, see steers" and his home phone number was scribbled out in ink.

In the front of each book were pages of important phone numbers and in the back there were pages of things to remember; things like possible songs for the end-of-the-year banquet slide show or potential Christmas gifts for members of my family

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Oh Pioneer!

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they'll be better. So the question is: do we still have what it takes to be pioneers on this new frontier?

Those without the strength of vision and those who fail to learn from the past will probably fall away. But I believe that those who are willing to learn from the past and have the strength, faith and determination to hold to the important things will survive and prosper.

Our strength is national, but our survival is local. Our com-

munities will decide our worth in the end. So, as we have heard many times, honor and strengthen those ties. Take care of your community and they will take care of you.

I was raised on the belief that the Lord helps those who help themselves, so if it is to be, it's up to me. Where there's a will, there is always a way and success will come to those who refuse to quit until they find it. Giving up is not an option, so safe journey and keep your powder dry! ☼

The Old Blue CATA Calendar

(Continued from page 3)

or things to bring up at the next CATA meeting.

Ag Instruction Same

Isat there at my old desk rather melancholy for more than an hour that day, flipping through 27 years of my 32-year teaching career. It occurred to me at that moment that things may have changed a bit in terms of technology, but in many ways, what we do as ag instructors is still very much the same as it was 30-plus years ago.

I don't know why I kept all those books; I could have just thrown them away at the end of each year. It may have something to do with my sense of history. I do, however, remember why I started using them. The beginning of my teaching career was marred with organizational slips like being late for meetings, forgetting appointments, and poor communications because of not knowing someone's phone number. I would forget to send in contest or conference registrations on time. My students would be ill prepared at a B.I.G. or Opening and Closing contest because the events "snuck up on me on the regional calendar" and we wouldn't start practicing until a day or two before the event.

Organizational System

While in college and at my first CATA Summer Conference, I remember a veteran, Joe Sabol, saying that you need to get and use some type of organizational system. Daily planners had not been invented yet, so the "little blue CATA book" that you got for paying your dues became my system for staying organized.

I had no clue how busy I would be as a young ag teacher. The first thing I did when I got my new calendar was go through my old one and put in all the important holidays, birthdays, anniversary date, and phone numbers in their proper places. Then I would add the CATA events, the FFA contests, conferences, meetings, and practices, etc. This became a yearly ritual,

usually while sitting through a meeting at State CATA Conference after the regional calendar had been distributed. I would get the school calendar and put in school in-service days, staff meetings, and early out days. Heck, I even had a page with all

with colleagues and family (texting seemed less interruptive and demanding). I even joined the social media era and enjoyed staying up to date with my children, family, and friends.

Linking Calendars

This fall, I figured out how to

Success of instructors is tied to how they organize life, activities, and information

of the different bell schedules for rallies and fog delays.

I would also put in family information like vacations and church events. I would take it home and my wife and I would sit down and update our family calendars to make sure we had as few conflicts as possible. And if I ever lost or misplaced the thing, it would be like going to work without combing your hair; it was really uncomfortable.

Today's ag teacher has all the same pressures of time management and organization that I had in the early '80s, but with much better organizational tools available. We are all still classroom teachers, coaches, colleagues, advisors, community members, spouses, parents, softball coaches, and much, much more.

Success/Organization

It is my firm belief that: **The success of AG instructors is directly tied to the degree to which they can organize their life, their activities, and their information.**

But, getting back to the desk full of little books. You might wonder why the desk held only 27 years' worth of books. In about 2006 or 2007, my adult kids at home talked me into getting a smart phone. I was very skeptical at first because of the cost, the difficulty of learning new technology, and it seemed hard to imagine letting go of the "blue calendar book."

I weaned myself from the paper and started using more digital organization. It was nice having all my phone numbers and contact data at my fingertips. I used texting to communicate

link my school computer, email and calendar to my phone. Today, if I add a date to my phone, it is instantly added to my school computer and to our family computer at home. I can add alerts that go off and tell me things like "you have a meeting with your principal in 15 minutes."

I often think, "Holy cow, I had totally forgotten about that meeting." Good thing I had that alert put into my phone calendar to remind me.

Early on in the cell phone era I would worry about losing or breaking my phone (I once dropped my phone into the hog sump at the school farm). I worry much less today because all of my data, contacts, emails and calendars are backed up on my school and/or home computer. I am able to "share" my calendar with my wife, children and coworkers. I worry a lot less today about forgetting or missing things.

Today's young teachers have grown up with these everyday tools their whole life. When a smart phone, coupled with a computer and the Internet, is used correctly, some of the pressure of a difficult work schedule and home life can be relieved. I remember the stress of my first couple of years and I can say that much of it came from not being very organized and worrying about "what have I forgotten."

And yet, even with all these wonderful and, admittedly, sometimes frustrating tools available, I still see teachers struggling with organization. Registration forms turned in late, meetings missed, communication breaks down, and the stress builds.

Tips to Relieve Stress

It does not have to be that way. Below are some suggested tips that can help relieve some of the stress in our life using current technology available to us:

- Get a smart phone and figure out how to use the calendar, contacts, texting, and e-mail.
- If you get stuck, don't be afraid to ask anyone under the age of 25 for help.
- Figure out how to link your phone to your home and/or school computers to share calendars and contact information and read e-mails.
- Update the calendar with CATA information the minute you get it.
- Spend time collecting and updating contact information for all important people in your work and home life. (I get at least one text or call a week asking for someone else's contact information. I have figured out how to "share" contact info with texting.)
- Set alerts or reminders on your phone calendar for meetings, deadlines and events.
- Don't just put the event in the calendar, put the date the registration is due. Put the date the hotel reservation needs to be made. Put the date the permission slips need to be handed out or turned in.
- Use the "Notes" page on your phone for alarm codes, school day schedules, passwords, open PO numbers, and other information you may frequently need but often cannot remember. You could even use the notes page for a "to do" list.
- And finally, check your phone calendar each morning before you start your day.

I am not, by any means, a technology guru. But, with the help of younger colleagues or one of my children, I have been able to advance from the "old blue book" to the digital era of today so that I can relieve stress and be a better teacher. I hope you can too. ☼

Teacher Educator News

Cal Poly Pomona University Update

By Dr. Kim Miller, Assistant Professor, Agricultural Science and Education Department

A Big Welcome to a New Leader

Cal Poly Pomona College of Agriculture has seen some pretty big changes this year, with new faculty, new programs and plans for new MS degree options (watch for more about this exciting addition in the next issue of the *GOLDEN SLATE*). One of the most significant changes happened last school year, when Dan Hostetler stepped down as the Plant Science Department chair and the interim Agriculture Business Management and Agricultural Science Department chair. Never fear, a smaller office does not mean smaller responsibilities for Dan. He will continue to teach plant science courses and run the schools' farm properties as he has done so well for more than 35 years!

After Dan's announcement, the search was on for a new department chair and the decision was made to conduct an off-campus search for a new fearless leader. Enter Dr. Valerie Mellano, an individual who is no stranger to managing groups of individuals or the agriculture industry in

as they relate to agriculture. I was also the county director for several years.

Q: What are your ties/links to the agriculture industry?

A: My father was a rancher in Montana, raising Black Angus cattle on a beautiful place along

starting here, I would say that the cooperation and enthusiasm that I have had from the members of the College of Ag has been just the best. I also love being in a campus environment, and the

What do you like to do with your free time (when you find it)?

A: Every summer we spend time in Montana-hiking, fishing and rafting. It is a wonderful down time for us. Other than



general. Dr. Mellano took over as department chair this past September, and recently I had the chance for a little "Q & A" about life at Cal Poly Pomona and her new position. Here's what she had to say:

Q: Tell me about your educational background?

A: I am originally from Montana, and received my B.S. degree in animal science/production option from Montana State University. I stayed on at Montana State and completed my M.S. degree in plant pathology, then came to UC Riverside and earned a Ph.D. in plant pathology in 1988.

Q: What did you do prior to coming to Cal Poly Pomona?

A: I worked for UC Cooperative Extension in San Diego County for 22 years as an environmental issues farm advisor, mainly focusing on water quality and waste management issues

the Yellowstone River. Most of my family was involved in ranching and forage and grain production, and many of them had homesteaded in Montana during the 1800s, primarily in the Gallatin Valley near Bozeman. When I moved to California, I married my graduate school lab partner, Mike Mellano, who is part of a large family-owned cut flower growing and wholesaling operation in the Oceanside and Los Angeles area.

Q: What are you enjoying the most about Cal Poly Pomona thus far?

A: When I visited CPP last year for reasons unrelated to the chair position, I was struck by its enormous potential. There is space, there are good people, great and enthusiastic students, and a whole long list of alumni that would really like to see the College of Ag succeed. Since

students are really wonderful and responsive to opportunity.

Q: Why is there a new name for the ABM/Ag Sci/Plant Science Department?

A: As with most institutions funded by public dollars, there is a push to minimize the administrative overhead. This means that we need to condense the number of departments, department offices staffed by employees, etc. The decision to consolidate departments under one umbrella was made before I started, but it makes a lot of sense and I think it will work well. The new name of the department, which was chosen through a vote by the members of the department, is the "Department of Agricultural Sciences and Management," reflecting all of the disciplines under this umbrella. The majors under this new name will stay the same, just the department name has been changed.

Q: What are your hobbies?

that, I like water sports; I recently started rowing (crew) in San Diego, but I don't go as often as I should because I am now working here instead of there, so I am a weekend warrior. I have also been a lifelong swimmer, and do that whenever I can. I am a big sports fan — football and baseball especially. All of our kids were athletes, and it became a way of life for us to spend our weekends at one tournament or another.

I am honestly kind of a homebody — I love to cook/bake and I really like to read a lot! My current goal is to read one classic each month.

Everyone in the "Department of Agricultural Sciences and Management" was happy to welcome Dr. Mellano to the College of Agriculture this fall and we are looking forward to her positive contributions to the university.

Ag Field Day 2013

It always seems so far away,
(Continued on page 6)

News and Views

We're All in This Together

By Clay Freeman, Operations Division Chair, Foothill High School

After this summer's secondary division meeting I found myself asking the question, "Now what?" The group was sequestered and divided, the bosses weren't watching, the discussion was candid, and opinions were exposed — now what? Then after a few months, the results of the meeting were sent out in their raw form. After reviewing the report, it was clear that all three groups were committed to both maintaining the best traditions of agricultural education and seeing it evolve to meet the needs of today's students. With these two goals in mind, I believe that each of the chronologically segregated groups are going to have specific roles moving forward.

Rookies

First the rookies, new teachers, bring a lot to the table. As a group, these teachers have a tremendous amount of energy and enthusiasm for teaching. They are typically more comfortable with the ever-changing technology and social media available for the classroom of today. Furthermore, their age gives them an advantage in relating to high school students. Wow!

Energy, enthusiasm, technological familiarity and a closer

connection with students — what's missing? Experience.

New teachers are blindsided daily by the miniature disasters that veteran teachers consider to be routine. The new teachers' role moving forward will be to drag veterans into the 21st century, seek out mentors, and begin to assume roles of leadership in our profession. The give and take between the generations will benefit both veteran teachers and new teachers, but the latter

definitely has the most to gain in the relationship.

Finding trustworthy, honorable mentors will be the best way for new teachers to decrease the number and intensity of the mistakes they make on their way to becoming experienced teachers themselves.

Tweeners

Between the new teachers and the veterans are those teachers who have been affectionately labeled the "Tweeners." This group of teachers probably has the lion's share of responsibility with regard to the future of our profession. The next lineup of state staff will come from this group and our own Jim Aschwanden will likely be replaced by a Tweener.

This changing of the guard will require the middle children to stop flying under the radar and step up into new roles of leadership and responsibility. It is no longer acceptable to sit in the back of the room texting at regional CATA meetings or trying to win the annual game of "not it" when it comes time to elect sectional officers.

It is time for Tweeners to step up and serve by seeking out positions as officers, getting involved in committees, and finding ways to give back to the profession.

Veterans

Lastly, it is time for the veteran teachers to pull the curtain back and give up the keys to the king-

dom. New teachers and Tweeners alike need to know that they can come to veterans for advice, especially on issues that arise outside of the classroom.

How do you keep a marriage together throughout a 30-year career as an ag teacher? What is the best way to defuse a volatile parent, or worse yet, a volatile administrator?

These are but a few of the questions the veterans can help us to address if we are willing to ask and they are willing to answer.

In my opinion, the key to the future of our profession is going to be ensuring that all of the players know their roles and have some skin in the game. We all need to know that we are not alone.

If you think that you are the only one struggling to motivate students to show up for a CDE practice, you're not.

If you think that you are the only one facing the challenges of being a new department head, you're not.

And if you think that you are the only one being asked to embrace a new curriculum after teaching the same thing for 25 years, guess what, you're not.

Cling to the fact that you are a part of the greatest support system in education and someone out there has the answers you are looking for and we are all in this together. ✨

Teacher Educator News

Cal Poly Pomona University Update

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but spring will be upon us before we know it, so make sure your calendars are marked for the Cal Poly Pomona/Mt. San Antonio College Agriculture Field Day on April 6, 2013. We have made lots of improvements to the entire day and contests, based on feedback from a post-field day survey from last year, and are looking forward to hosting another fun and educational day for everyone. Be on the lookout for an email that will be sent in mid-January regarding registering and participating. Both institutions are already getting energized to provide everyone with a great day of FFA and agriculture greatness!

Really 'Geared Up' for Spring

Move over May flowers and Mother's Day, and make room for another great month of May event! That particular glorious month in spring is also when

Cal Poly Pomona Farm Store and College of Agriculture hosts the Tractor and Car Show/Strawberry Festival. This event has grown from a handful of hand-waxed muscle cars and CPP tractors to two parking lots full of the classiest roadsters in California and a pasture full of historical and heavenly tractors from just about every era imaginable.

With free admission, tasty food, gift vendors, a petting zoo, great Southern California weather, a Farm Store over-full with Cal Poly Pomona products (try the orange juice), and a pick-your-own strawberries field, how can visitors go wrong?

If you are in the area the weekend of Mother's Day (thanks, moms) stop by and enjoy the sights and sounds of motors, machinery, and the sweetest strawberry this side of Bakersfield. See you Saturday, May 11, 2013 ✨

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Message from the California FFA Foundation

By Amy Madison, Director of Fund Development

When I started as the foundation director of fund development, I knew I was in for a big job. The realization of just how big this job really was hit me as I sat in my first fund director's meeting at National Convention last year. Not only was this my first director's meeting, but it was my first time attending National Convention, which in itself is something to behold.

The fund director's meeting is a great collaboration between National FFA and the states to share information, projects, successes and ideas that are working to raise funds and awareness of the FFA. As I listened to other states' funding programs, sponsors and donors, I realized I (California) had about 15 years of fundraising to make up for. Add to this the simple fact that our state is, on average, three times larger than most other states and you get a fairly good idea of my realization.

Putting FFA on Radar

As our funding landscape has changed, and will continue to change, my goal is to get

agricultural education and FFA on the radar screen of business and industry through an array of messages and resources.

A favorite analogy of mine is: "Agricultural education and the FFA are the wheels on the vehicle." Without these "wheels," how many "vehicles" would be a future voice for agriculture?

This is a message that I will strive to share with industry by inserting FFA in the conversation and making us visible.

Another strong message is that California agriculture teachers and the California FFA are a force to be reckoned with. Gathering

7,500 agriculture license plate pledges was no easy task, but accomplished. March 2013 will go down in history when the agriculture hits the road because of you.

Chase Grant

In September, you answered another call to action and helped secure a \$10,000 Chase Community Giving grant through online voting. Although we didn't garner the 90,000 online votes of Boston's Egyptian Cancer Network (ECN) to win the \$250,000 grant, we will certainly make this our goal for next year with better action at chapter and regional gatherings. (BTW

— ECN helps to further cancer education, research and care, as well as medical infrastructure, in Egypt.)

When everyone is working toward a common goal that they believe in, great things can happen. Fundraising is a big job, but the California FFA and the agriculture teachers who lead it are bigger!

With outreach and your help, we will begin changing the funding landscape of the California FFA to ensure its success for generations to come. Thank you for letting me be a part of this bright future! ☺

What Does the Future Hold for Agricultural Education?

By Hugh Mooney, Consultant, California Department of Education

How might the results of last November's election impact agricultural education? This is not an easy question to answer. Regardless of your political affiliation or your opinion of the impact of the passage or failure of the various propositions, it is difficult to have a clear vision for what the future holds. Those who advocate for agricultural education at the Capitol have concerns because of some of the proposals out there.

'Weighted Pupil Formula'

During the last budget process, Governor Brown made it clear that he wants to eliminate all categorical funding to the schools and replace our current funding with what is referred to as the "Weighted Pupil Formula." The weighted formula is designed to provide districts with greater numbers of English Language Learners and students on Free and Reduced Meals additional funding.

At first glance you would think that those who support additional funding for these groups would support the formula. That is not necessarily the case.

Here is their concern: The additional funds provided to support these groups of students would go to districts with no restrictions. For example, those who want additional funds for English Language Learners want those additional funds restricted

to support English Language Learners. With our current categorical funding (Ag Incentive Grant is a categorical fund), the funds are restricted to support the targeted group of students.

Questions

It is anybody's guess what school funding may look like in the years ahead. The current budget was dependent on the passage of "Proposition 30." There was no language in "Proposition 30" for future budgets.

Now that the Democratic Party has a two-thirds majority in both the Assembly and the Senate, they have the ability to pass a budget including tax increases.

The Governor has said that he will not approve a tax increase without the vote of the people. Will he veto a tax increase approved by the Legislature? If he does, will the Democratic Legislature use the two-thirds majority to override the Governor's veto?

Career Tech in Funding Formula

Those who are involved in education policy in Sacramento know that the Governor plans to move forward with some form of a "Weighted Pupil Formula." With the push back that the Governor's office experienced last year, they say that they understand that they must address Career Technical Education in the funding formula.

There are some in Sacramento who believe that the "Weighted Pupil Formula" will include additional funding for students enrolled in Career Technical Education course sequences. If that happens, then your agricultural education student will generate additional funding for your school district.

If, as was proposed in last year's budget, "Weighted Pupil Formula" funds are provided to districts without restriction, how

will your program convince the district that it should allocate those funds to the agricultural education program?

Importance of Advisory Committee

If you were to review previous articles that I have written, more than once, the article will have identified the importance of an agricultural advisory committee of influence. If school funding evolves as the Governor hopes it will, there will be no group of people more important to your program the Agricultural Education Advisory Committee.

If we are lucky, categorical funding and the Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant funding will remain as it is now. If change happens, will your program be ready to move forward? Does your advisory committee have the influence to make a positive difference for your students? ☺

Built for Purpose = Built to Last

By John Avila, South Coast Region President, Carpinteria High School

Agricultural education combines Classroom Instruction, Supervised Agricultural Experience, and the FFA organization through integral instruction. The agricultural education model is supported by both federal and state law.

As we celebrated the new year, with it came new hopes, new dreams and new resolutions. With the new year, we also face new challenges of the Common Core (AKA the new silver bullet to save education), the continuing "Funding Games" of the California Legislature, and the "fiscal cliff" logjam of philosophies at the national level.

It seems not long ago that my friends and I were on stage at Summer Conference, receiving our CATA Code of Ethics and heading off to our new careers as official ag teachers. I still remember what the motivational speaker taught us that day: "Passion" + "Vision" + "Action" = "Dream Maker."

As educators and leaders of industry, you make dreams happen every day for student success through the real-world application of our ag education philosophy. The Ag Ed Model: three interlocked circles of Classroom/Lab, SAE, and Leadership that have produced a very well-rounded productive person for the past 85 years.

I say with great pride that we are the CATA and we are committed to giving young Americans the tools and experiences, and the knowledge and faith to make the world a better place. Our mission at times seems impossible, but with the help of our friends and peers within our profession, it is attainable.

Worthy Cause

There are many reasons ag ed has been such a worthy cause since 1917 — and so important for the times in which we live today. I thought about the benefits of ag education — how it builds character and promotes citizenship, volunteerism and patriotism. I reflected what it takes to build a generation of youth who are healthy and engaged in their communities. The "Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve" attitude is a true representation of the shared values we have, which is the fabric our profession, our industry, and of this country.

I considered the importance of tradition, in particular the

tradition of agricultural education and the impact it has made on our country. I thought about heroes — many members who have gone on to be community leaders, national heroes, rock stars, members of congress, and even a U.S. President.

I thought about E.M. Tiffany when he wrote the FFA Creed in 1930 during the start of the Great Depression, which was written with great purpose — to inspire generations of agriculturists; *in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years.*

E.M. Tiffany had the "Vision," he had the "Passion" and he had the "Action." Today, FFA is the largest career and technical student organization in U.S. schools.

All of these concepts are so important as CATA members strive to put our "Passion" in our "Vision," and to back it up with "Action" in ways that inspire our students to achieve goals beyond their wildest dreams.

Three Circles of Ag Ed

Today, I want to focus on the importance and longstanding relationship of the **Three Circles of Ag Education**: *Classroom Instruction, Supervised Agricultural Experience and FFA.* The ag ed model needs to evolve with these changing times, but still stick to the three-circle philosophy that has served our students so well — from the Basic Core to college and everything in between.

Education has many challenges and every one is looking for the silver bullet.

This past fall, my school sent the Ag Department and Science Department to be trained on the New Common Core — focusing



on English language development and how to order thinking for greater success. As part of that activity, my fellow science teachers were astonished to learn that, according to Dr. Kate Kinsella, Ed.D., San Francisco State University, Center for Teacher Efficacy and others, that something called "soft skills" are the real key to professional success!

According Dr. Kinsella and other researchers, the more valuable employees are ones who can grow and learn as the business changes, can work well in group settings with others, and who can look at challenges from many different angles without looking for the one "right" answer.

Even real-world types like Mike Rowe from *Dirty Jobs* have consistently argued that the biggest challenge facing schools is the need to train students "with skills to pay the bills."

Top 20 Key Points

So, what are the top 20 key points identified by employers as the most important factors in deciding who to hire? Let's take a look at the list:

1. Enthusiasm for the job
2. Safety
3. Courtesy
4. Honesty
5. Grammar
6. Reliability
7. Flexibility
8. Team Skills

9. Eye Contact
10. Cooperation
11. Adaptability
12. Follow Rules — attendance and punctuality
13. Self-Directed
14. Good Attitude
15. Writing Skills
16. Driver License
17. Dependability
18. Dress and Appearance
19. Self-Supervising
20. Good References

Overlooked Model

You may have noticed from the list that ag ed encompasses virtually all of these characteristics. While looking for the next silver bullet, our politicians and education policy leaders are overlooking the one model that really produces the kinds of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are in demand by employers — ag education!

Instead, our Legislature and other state leaders collectively shoot themselves in the foot by slashing funding for the very programs that produce the most-needed skills — programs like CTE student organizations. Go figure!

Enforce Education Code

Our Legislature needs to enforce **Education Code Section 52450-52454**, which states: *The Legislature of the State of California recognizes that agriculture is the most basic and singularly important industry in the state, that agriculture is of central importance to the welfare and economic stability of the state, and that the maintenance of this vital industry requires a continued source of trained and qualified individuals for employment in agriculture and agribusiness.*

Helping young Americans make the most of themselves and

(Continued on page 14)

History — Are We Repeating Ourselves?

By Charles Parker, Consultant, California Department of Education

Prior to 1900, two institutions offered instruction in agriculture — the College of Agriculture of the University of California and the Chaffey College of Agriculture, a private institution established in 1883 and continuing instruction through 1895.

In 1901, the Legislature passed an act establishing the California Polytechnic School at San Luis Obispo. The school opened for instruction in October 1903 as a vocational school, to teach agriculture, mechanics, commercial and household arts. The school became the first public institution in the state outside the University of California to offer instruction in agriculture, and the first to teach this subject on the secondary level.

In 1905, legislation was passed that resulted in 779 acres of land being purchased which adjoined Davis in Yolo County. This site has borne the title “University Farm” since the doors opened for high school instruction in agriculture in January 1909.

High School Programs

In the year 1905–06, the Kern County Union High School in Bakersfield became the first high school district in California to offer agricultural instruction. A.G. Grant taught general sci-

ence, soils and crops, physics, and chemistry.

The Gardena High School in Los Angeles became the second high school to offer instruction in agriculture when, in 1908, courses in botany and general science with special references to agriculture were established.

These two schools not only were pioneers in the field of agricultural instruction, but both experimented with school farms as instructional devices. In 1909 Gardena purchased a 14-acre farm, built a lath house, mushroom house and greenhouse; and installed an irrigation system. In July 1909, Bakersfield purchased 27-acres of land and planted alfalfa and cereals with a plan to establish a dairy herd.

Other notable pioneer agricultural high schools were Oxnard and Imperial, both of which began in 1909.

Growth

In 1905–06 there was one school

out of 179 high schools which offered agriculture instruction. At the end of five years, in 1910, only six of the 215 high schools offered agriculture courses, representing less than 3% of the total schools in California. In 1911, this number jumped to 25; in 1912 to 47; and by 1916–17 almost one-third of the 281 high schools, 93, included agriculture in their programs.

Types of Courses

In the early 1900s, there were three types of courses.

- The first was the “applied-science” type, where instruction in subjects such as physical, geography, general science, and botany were carried on by experiments, with discussion following. The purpose

(Continued on page 15)



New Professionals Institute

By Katy Teixeira, Anderson Union High School

New Professionals is an opportunity to see old friends, learn new things, and to be inspired by others in our profession. I attended the New Professionals Institute the last three years, and even as a third-year teacher, I learned more this last time around than before.

Opportunities

The first year at New Professionals I was just so excited to be getting FREE STUFF from the presenters, and seeing Mr. Beard in his Santa hat reminded me that Christmas break was just around the corner.

During my second year at New Professionals, I was ready to share some of my new and great ideas with my peers, and excited to see what they had been up to.

This past year, I enjoyed the industry tours and was inspired by the first- and second-year teachers and their passion for our profession.

Rebuild Confidence

It doesn't matter where we teach, or what teams we coach, we are all ag teachers and New Professionals is the perfect opportunity for new teachers to rebuild confidence that might

have been lost during those first few months of school.

Amidst the conversations about classroom management and FFA Point of Awards charts, we teachers of agriculture become a family. I am grateful to meet with my peers, learn from the experiences of teachers who have been in the profession for a while, and most recently, am grateful to continue to learn from the bright, educated and inspiring teachers who are continuing to come through California's agricultural teacher educator programs.

Although this was my last year to attend New Professionals, I hope that one day I can come back and share my experiences with the new teachers, and continue to build and nurture our Ag Teacher Family. ✨

Built for Purpose = Built to Last

(Continued from page 13)

encouraging them to serve their communities is a high calling. Since 1917, ag teachers, parents, employers and community leaders in towns across America have answered that call, and they've made agricultural education what it is today.

Retain, Adapt, Evolve

Those three circles really do contain the “magic” that seems so elusive to those searching for the next new silver bullet in education. We must do everything we can as ag teachers to retain the essence of what we do for students, while adapting and evolving during these tough times. As we ponder ag education in the year 2030, we need to hold on to those values and ideals that have been so valuable to our communities and country, while

figuring out a way to exist despite the ignorance and indifference of our state leaders. It's a daunting challenge, but one that is worthy of our efforts. Making a positive difference in the lives of young people must remain our goal and our legacy.

Your involvement in our professional organization is the key to ensuring a viable, productive future for agricultural education. As a CATA member, I look forward to working with incredibly dedicated people who appreciate the values and ideals so effectively infused within the ag education model. Our passion, our vision, and our actions can and will result in making dreams become reality for future generations of agricultural leaders. I look forward to meeting this challenge! ✨

The Most Important Thing I Can Teach You

By Robert Norwood, Southern Region President, Jurupa Valley High School

As ag teachers, we all know that without a plan, without a charted course, without a clear map to follow, it is nearly impossible to reach a destination or achieve a goal. As we formulate a vision for agricultural education for the next 16 years I hope you take the opportunity to do the same for your students, and help them develop a vision and plan that will serve them a lifetime.

I don't know how other teachers begin the semester in their classes, but quite a few years back I started teaching a lesson that I now call "The Most Important Thing I Can Teach You." It's actually a simple idea that I try to get across to students, something that causes them to ponder, to think, and if I'm successful, to develop a plan, their career plan. It fits perfectly in the first week's crazy, hectic schedule.

On the first or second day, I pass out a "Who Are You" question sheet with a list of simple questions like favorite foods, colors, music, TV shows, movies, places to go, what job they would like to do after high school, why are they in this class, and more.

The next day, I have everyone share some of the answers with the class. I will collect and read them later. That day or the next, depending on time, the lesson starts out with a very simple and certainly vocationally slanted question. I ask, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

I clarify the question for some by adding, "What job do you want to do for 30 or 40 years after you graduate from high school?"

I let everyone share what they have written. A few just give me "that" shrug, yet I am always surprised how many do have one or two jobs in mind.

Job vs. Career

At this point in the lesson, I believe it is important to discuss the difference between a job and a career. Once that is out of the way, I tell my students, "What I am going to tell you and show you next is the most important thing I can teach you."

I tell my students that if a job or career is their goal, they must have a clear path, a roadmap, a **plan** — not just a plan in their heads, but a detailed, written plan. Without a goal in mind, there is no plan, and without

a plan, there is no direction to move toward, and without movement you go nowhere. I explain that they need a plan that starts today and ends when they reach their goal.

I ask those with a plan to raise their hand and share. Typically there are only a few and the answers tend to be the same. "Graduate from high school, go to a trade school or college, and then get a job."

"That's great," I usually say. "But **how** are you going to do that? What is your plan to get from here, point A, to there, point Z? Are there classes in high school to help get you there? What classes here at Jurupa Valley can help you? Which college or school do you go to after high school to get a degree, training or certification? Who can help you find out? Where can you go on campus to get these answers?"

Of course they don't usually know, and with the answers to these questions, therein lies "the most important thing I can teach you," a plan to guide you through high school and on to a career of your choice.

Now, of course, is the time to put the Agriculture Incentive Grant Student Data Sheet/ Career Plan in front of each and every student. Before you have them begin to fill it out, dust off the school's course catalog and make it available. Pass out your handout with the Agriculture Department's Career Pathways and Recommended Course of Study on the front and maybe a graduation requirement check sheet printed on the back for good measure.

Repeat Questions

By this point I'm usually flooded with questions that I either answer in general to the class, in small groups, or individually. Two questions invariably pop up

every year:

"Mr. Norwood what did you want to be when you were in high school? Did you always want to be a teacher?" My answer to that is always no, I did not think about being an agriculture teacher in high school, I wanted to be a forest ranger. I go on to use my experience of choosing an initial career early on, and developing a plan to guide me in choosing the classes I took in high school and eventually college.

Although it was a circuitous path to teaching agriculture, it started with the initial choice that landed me in an Agriculture Forestry class as a freshman. I use my experience to emphasize that it is not necessarily the goal or destination that is important, as the first step toward that goal. There will be curves, twists and turns along the way. It's all about moving in a direction — not standing still. We all have our own stories to share and I believe they make great examples to motivate our students.

Lesson Time Varies

You are probably trying to figure out how many days this lesson will take. For me that's not an issue, I'm teaching "the most important thing I can teach you" to my students. I take as long as it takes. It will vary depending on your presentation, how many questions you have to field, how many students need one-on-one help, the size of your class, and other variables.

Take at least two days, if not three, as a rule of thumb. You will find one of the side benefits of this process is it becomes a fantastic recruitment tool. It gives you a chance to sit and plan a four-year agricultural course of study with your students.

Revisit the Career Plan before next year's registration and have your students use it as a guide in selecting classes. Maybe their goal and choices have changed and the plan needs to be updated; this is a great time to accomplish this.

(Continued on page 16)

History — Are We Repeating Ourselves?

(Continued from page 14)

of these courses was to impart as many of the fundamental principles as possible.

- The second type was the "one-course" type, usually found in small high schools. In these schools, one course in science, designed as "general agriculture" was offered to the student. The instruction was made practical in some schools having home projects.
- The third was the "full-curriculum" type. In this type an agriculture subject or an applied science subject was offered in each of the four years. These programs were generally offered in large schools such as Stockton, Fresno, etc.

Science with Ag Flavor

It was written in 1916 by Edwin R. Snyder, "It is evident, from the description of the types of agriculture courses taught during the early 1900s, that they were, in effect, science courses with an agriculture flavor."

Mr. Snyder went on to say: "The agricultural courses in our high schools have too largely resolved themselves into courses in science taught agriculturally. What we need in these schools are courses in farming taught scientifically."

The above was taken from the document "A History of Agricultural Education in California Public Schools." For the full document visit CalAgEd. ✪

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News and Views

The Most Important Thing I Can Teach You

(Continued from page 15) Are you doing something similar and/or have suggestions to share? I would like to hear from you. If you do not have a Career Pathways/Recommended Course of Study and would like a copy of ours, feel free to email me at robert_norwood@jusd.k12.ca.us, or give me a call at (951) 360-2640. ☼

2012–2013 Calendar of Activities

January 17–18.....	Winter Governing Board.....	Galt
January 17–18.....	Student Teacher Conclave.....	Modesto
January 26.....	Natural Resources State Finals.....	Reedley College
February 2.....	Winter State Finals - Citrus, Tree and Vine Pruning.....	CSU - Fresno
February 23.....	Central Region Meeting.....	Modesto
February 23.....	San Joaquin Region Meeting.....	Reedley
February 25.....	South Coast Region Meeting.....	San Luis Obispo
March 9.....	Superior Region Meeting.....	Chico
March 23.....	North Coast Region Meeting.....	Eureka
April 6.....	Southern Region Meeting.....	Pomona
April 17–20.....	NAAE Region I Conference.....	Pendleton, Oregon
April 20.....	CSU - Fresno Field Day.....	CSU - Fresno
April 20-23.....	State FFA Leadership Conference.....	Fresno
May 4.....	State FFA Judging Finals.....	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 23.....	Executive Committee Meeting.....	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 23.....	Pre-Conference Governing Board.....	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 23–27.....	CATA Summer Conference.....	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 27.....	Governing Board Summer Retreat.....	San Luis Obispo