

News & Views

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James Named Mississippi Teacher of the Year



Lee James, Mississippi, 2005-06 President-Elect

Lee James, NAAE President-Elect, is soaking in his newfound celebrity status as he

“You can’t describe this. Thirty-five graduated in my class. To go from that, to where I am today is a God-given opportunity,” said James who remains humble about his accomplishments. James has been actively involved in agricultural education for 29 years and has worked as an Agricultural Power and Machinery Instructor for the Choctaw County Career and Technical Center since 2000.

The final announcement was made during the 2006 Mississippi Department of Education Mega Conference held on June 6 in Jackson. The Mega Conference hosts over 4,500 teachers, administrators, business leaders, legislators, Department of Education personnel and others each year.

When the announcement came, James was among family, friends, and colleagues. “I was just floored; I was very happy to have my family with me. It was just a whirlwind,” explained James. “This all goes back to my ninth grade year in high school when I had an ag teacher that impacted me so much that I knew this was what I wanted to do.”

As the 2006 Mississippi Teacher of the Year, James has received a stipend that will be accompanied by a multitude of opportunities to help further the development of the Mississippi educational

system. For instance, James will lead workshops at the Mississippi Teacher Revitalization Conference, attend the National Teacher of the Year Conference in Dallas, and have the opportunity to meet President

Bush and first lady Laura Bush next spring. These opportunities will further empower James to share his passion for the profession with others.

has been named the 2006 Mississippi Teacher of the Year. James’s passion exhibited in the classroom, profession, and his community has fueled his career from the start.

“You can’t describe this. Thirty-five graduated in my class. To go from that to where I am today is a God-given opportunity.”

The selection process for the coveted Mississippi Teacher of the Year Award began early this spring as each school district nominated one

teacher. These outstanding educators then progressed on to the state level where four were chosen to take part in the interview portion of the process, representing each of the four congressional districts in Mississippi.

During the interview process, the four selected teachers were questioned about their ideas involving education, about dealing with different learning styles and students, the definition of the whole child and his views regarding the Mississippi Department of Education. Going into the interview, James was confident and saw this as an opportunity to demonstrate the importance of agriculture in the classroom. “Eighty percent of the jobs in Mississippi are related to agriculture,” emphasized James.

“This all goes back to my ninth grade year in high school when I had an ag teacher that impacted me so much that I knew this was what I wanted to do.”

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Ideas Unlimited

Exploring the "Green Industry"

Serving as the agricultural education teacher and FFA advisor for Wauseon High School, Eric Richer uses a variety of lessons and hands-on learning to teach his students. One of the more creative lessons Richer formulated for his students has been in Landscape Design and Turf Grass Management, which focuses on the needs of students interested in the "Green Industry" of horticulture.

In order to help his students better understand the classroom concepts of designing and maintaining golf course greens, Richer incorporated a lab practicum where his student could design and install a working putting green on school grounds.

By using the putting green laboratory, Richer's students formed partnerships with many people in the community. Richer was able to develop a new resource of learning for his students by utilizing the expertise of respected community businesses. Students were able to develop relationships with the community that may lead to future employment endeavors.

For more information about this innovative idea, contact **Eric Richer**, 2005 Ideas Unlimited Region IV winner, at (419) 335-575. For more information about the NAAE Ideas Unlimited award program, contact the NAAE office by calling (800) 509-0204 or by sending an e-mail to Kellis.NAAE@uky.edu. The Ideas Unlimited Award Program is sponsored by **Delmar Thomson Learning**.



Eric Richer (OH), center, received the 2005 NAAE Region IV Ideas Unlimited award from Dave Rosenbaum, Delmar Thomson Learning (right) and Jeff Maierhofer, 2005 NAAE President (left).

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2005-06 NAAE Board



Seated left to right: **Allan Sulser** (UT), President; **Lee James** (MS), President Elect. Standing left to right: **Kevin Fochs** (MT), Region I Vice President; **Dr. Bill Hunter** (KS), Region II Vice President; **Tom Hofmann** (NE), Region III Vice President; **Harold Eckler** (MO), Region IV Vice President; **Ray Nash** (MS), Region V Vice President; and **Sally Shomo** (VA), Region VI Vice President.

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Teacher Mentor

Over the past 18 years, Mark Ketelhut has developed an outstanding agricultural education program at Miller High School. He works toward reaching all students using a wide range of teaching styles, community service projects, and hands-on activities. Ketelhut's students quickly realize that it is not important if they win or lose, but it is important if they are learning, growing, and developing the necessary skills to become future leaders.

Due to Ketelhut's guidance and dedication, many students and teachers across South Dakota have benefited from his knowledge and encouragement. "He leads with wit, thoughtfulness, experience, constructive feedback, and most importantly by example," expressed Gerri Ann Eide, South Dakota FFA Executive Secretary. Many of his students have continued in agricultural education, becoming FFA advisors and agriculture teachers as well.

For more information about successful teacher mentoring ideas, contact **Mark Ketelhut** by calling **(605) 853-2455**

or by sending an e-mail to **mark.ketelhut@k12.sd.us**. For more information about the NAAE Teacher Mentor award program, contact the NAAE office at **(800) 509-0204** or by sending an e-mail to **KELLIS.NAAE@uky.edu**. **CEV Multimedia**, in Lubbock, Texas, sponsors this award program.



Mark Ketelhut, SD (center), received the 2005 NAAE Region III Teacher Mentor award. Steven Akers, CEV Multimedia (right) and Jeff Maierhofer, 2005 NAAE President (left), presented the award.



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Teacher Spotlight

The Adult Agriculture Education Program began in 1987, offering 1 educational program consisting of local business displays. Today, the program has flourished, providing a series of educational programs throughout January and February. There are additional programs in November during Farm City Week and Agriculture Appreciation Week in March.

The curriculum is developed new each year to meet the needs of the community. Serving a large county, the program provides a variety of courses in order to serve the cattle ranchers, melon producers, foresters and several others in the agriculture industry. Each class is a meeting of the Young Farmer and Agribusiness Chapter. Once chapter business subsides, the local specialist shares valuable information the members can take and use in their prospective field. Past courses include Roadside Markets, Wild Game Management, Farm Equipment Safety, and Conservation Cost-Share Programs.

The Central High Young Farmers is one of the top chapters in South Carolina, winning several state awards and state recognition for excellence. Leaders within the program, as well as local partnerships developed, have helped make the Central High Adult Agricultural Education Program successful.

For more information about the NAAE Outstanding Young Member Award Program contact the NAAE office at **(800) 509-0204** or via email at **KELLIS.NAAE@uky.edu**. The Outstanding Young Member Award Program is sponsored by **John Deere**, as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.



Tim Maye, (SC), center, received the NAAE Region V Outstanding Postsecondary/Adult Program award from Lee James, Region IV VP (left).



JOHN DEERE

Pioneer Student Leadership Academy Hosted by NAAE

NAAE, in conjunction with the University of Kentucky, hosted the third annual Pioneer Student Leadership Academy (PSLA) at the University of Kentucky May 30 - June 9, 2006. Thirty-eight outstanding youth representing underserved populations participated in this competitive program that developed student's interests in science, technology, engineering and technology (STEM) career areas.

Identifying with the vision of the Pioneers in Education (PIE) Alliance "To prepare our nations youth for the 21st century workforce by promoting awareness of science, technology, engineering,

and mathematics in non-traditional career fields, and by increasing the number of underrepresented and underserved students in these fields," NAAE joined forces with the alliance formed in 2003.

The 38 participants in the 2006 PSLA are students entering their sophomore, junior or senior years of undergraduate coursework. They represent a variety of ethnic groups as well as 21 colleges and universities, alongside 23 majors and disciplines.

University of Kentucky Interim Provost Scott Smith welcomed PSLA participants to the Bluegrass. Several

other key leaders spoke with the students throughout the week. UK basketball head-coach Tubby Smith also held a "Good to Great" session for the PSLA participants.

"Hosting the 2006 PSLA at the University of Kentucky is a great treat for us," said Dr. Wm. Jay Jackman, NAAE executive director. "NAAE is fortunate to be located at this great university and to have the opportunity to draw on the university's resources for the academy. President Lee Todd, Interim Provost Scott Smith, and College of Agriculture Associate Dean Mike Mullen have been tremendous supporters of our efforts to bring the PSLA to the UK campus."

NAAE: *Something to be proud of..*



**Allen Sulser, Utah,
2005-06 NAAE
President**

I haven't been able to climb up on the divide of the mountain to see the valley for about a month now. The

snow is too sparse for the snow machine and too deep still for the four-wheeler. I know the view would be spectacular though. The high water is still running from the melting snow. I hope it lasts until the middle of June.

Summer has come early to this part of Utah and the first crop of hay is ready to be cut with very little water used. I spent yesterday cutting the first ten acres of alfalfa.

When I finished, I looked the field over and said to myself, *now there is something a person can be proud of.* There were

no rooster tails in the field, the windrows were even and smooth, and no sprinkler risers were broken. As I sat there on the tractor soaking in the evening sun and reflecting on the completed job, *I wondered if NAAE is something that a person can be proud of?*

...now there is something a person can be proud of..

Have we worked hard to become advocates? Have we participated in NAAE activities and conferences to make the organization better? Have we recruited any new members to join our professional organization? I realize that I always ask open ended questions and that your answer may be far different than mine, but my answers are yes, yes, and yes.

The national legislature is finally getting around to working on appropriations, so if you haven't been an advocate for the profession yet, it is not too late. Call, write, or e-mail your legislator today; the house has started and the senate will not be far behind. Tell them about your program, your successes, how Perkins affects both you and your school. I just used the NAAE website and the Legislative Action Center to contact my representative and it was a very easy and quick process. The NAAE needs you to become a better advocate for agriculture education.

I sincerely hope that you are planning on attending your Regional Meetings this summer. This is one area that you can truly make a difference in how our organization functions. Get involved in the committee process and let your voice and concerns

be heard, maybe even volunteer to be the regional chair or vice chair. The NAAE welcomes and needs your participation in this process. I hope to see many of you at the National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia November 28 thru December 2 also. Early bird registration is now open and lasts until

July 14, 2006, take advantage of it if you know that you are coming.

With summer upon us and state conferences being held, I would ask you to take a little extra time and recruit a new member or two into our professional organization. My efforts have increased over the last couple of years, along with that of others and Utah is nearly a 100% state; that's something that hasn't been achieved for quite a few years. I was in amazement as I studied the history of the NVATA and NAAE. Through reading the book Professional Leadership and Service, I saw that 100% membership was the norm in the sixties, seventies, and eighties. We should make an effort to renew that norm.

If you make it to Utah, stop by and I will show one of the prettiest views around. We'll be able to get there by then. We can discuss how to make the NAAE better for everyone, something we can all be proud of.

The NAAE welcomes and needs your participation in the process.

Summer Workshops

AgrowKnowledge Faculty Development Workshops

Bio-Link National Fellows Program: Agrowknowledge Track: June 3-8, 2006, University of California–Berkley
GIS for Agriculture Decision Making: June 14-16, Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids, IA
Math & Science: Investigating Plants and Soils: June 28-30, 2006, Ohio State University ATI
For more information and to register, please visit www.agrowknow.org/faculty-development/2006/.

US Department of Education's Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative Free Summer Workshops

For more information on the following workshops, please visit www.t2tweb.us/Workshops/About.asp.

General Summer Workshops:

June 5-6, Denver, Teachers of Grades 6-12
June 12-13, Atlanta, Teachers of Grades K-8
June 20-21, St. Paul, Teachers of Grades K-8
July 17-18, Pittsburg, Teachers of Grades 6-12

Joint Workshops with the National Park Service

June 22-23, Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historic Park, Math and History, Grades K-8
July 20-21, Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Celebration, Science and History, Grades K-12
August 7-8, Edison National Historic Site, Science, Grades 6-12

Joint Workshops with TechNet Partners

July 10-11, San Jose, CA, National Semiconductor, Science, K-12
July 12-13, Boston, MA, EMC, Math and Science, K-12
August 1-2, Raleigh, NC, Cisco, Math and Science, 8-12
August 8-9, Redmond, WA, Microsoft, Math and Science, K-12

Please visit the NAAE website at www.naae.org/links/workshops for the most recent listing of workshops.

Agricultural Educators Provide Educational Assistance in Republic of Georgia

Agricultural educators from the United States have recently assisted agricultural educators in the Republic of Georgia. Georgia is a former Soviet Republic located in Eastern Europe, south of Russia, northeast of Turkey, north of Armenia, and northwest of Azerbaijan. Through a USDA Foreign Agriculture Service grant to the University of Kentucky (UK) College of Agriculture, NAAE members were called in to assist with agricultural education development in Georgia.

In October 2005, Dr. Wm. Jay Jackman, NAAE Executive Director, participated in an agricultural education needs assessment visit to Georgia, with a team of professionals from five universities and one non-governmental agency. In March 2006, Jackman returned to Georgia along with Tony Jury, agriculture teacher at Gallatin County High School in Kentucky, and Dr. Larry Grabau, UK Professor of Agronomy.

During the March 2006 visit, this team worked with the faculty and students in two Agriculture Technical Colleges, one about an hour's drive from the capital city of Tbilisi and another in Senaki, in the western part of the country. The purpose of the March visit was to work with the Georgians on teaching techniques, student assessment techniques, and to lay the groundwork to establish a national professional association for the agriculture teachers in the country.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, financial resources in the former Soviet Republics have been diminished severely. In the rural areas, there is very little cash.

Families tend to barter for goods, including food they cannot produce on their home plots. Most people in the rural areas are farmers; however, they have limited inputs such as hybrid seed, fertilizers, and pesticides. Most families produce grapes and they have their own family recipes for sweet red wine. (The Georgians are very proud of their wines and they are eager to share them with visitors!) Livestock tend to be free-range, sometimes with a herder, and often tethered in a different location each day where some grass might be available. Modern, economical agricultural practices are needed in this country.

Tony Jury worked with the Georgian teachers on how to do great educational projects with limited resources, how to motivate students to learn, and techniques for assessing student achievement. Larry Grabau taught the Georgians about active learning and student engagement in the learning process. Jay Jackman presented the agricultural education model used throughout the United States and worked with teachers and administrators on establishing a national professional organization for agricultural educators.

The Georgians are intelligent, hard-working people. We are fortunate to have opportunities to travel to their country, assist them, and learn from them. We are hopeful that some Georgian agricultural educators will travel to the United States this fall to experience our nation's agricultural education system first-hand.

Wm. Jay Jackman



Agriculture students at Senaki Ag Tech College in the Republic of Georgia have formed an Agriculture Club. Gia Khargelia, kneeling on the left, is the director of this college.



Tony Jury (standing right), Galatin County, Kentucky agriculture teacher, presents to the instructors at Tsinamdzgvrant Kari Ag Tech College. Standing left is Nana Kashakashvili, the translator for the entire visit in Georgia.

Regional Updates

Region I

After helping a former student finalize her American FFA Degree, I was reminded of the contact we have with those exceptional students. Just a simple thought that I will throw out to you - please take time to do a little recruitment of those exceptional students. Yes, ask them to be teachers. After Region I was concluded I was energized with a focus to recruit more agricultural education teachers. How many times do we fail to ask our students to try agricultural education as a profession?

Special thanks to the Idaho association for hosting such an outstanding Region I Conference. It was a great experience and a true benefit to our profession. Let's keep a renewed focus on future conferences and find ideas that can really help our profession. Remember membership numbers for state delegates are finalized at the end of June so send in any new memberships. Please take a look at your professional state application; it is due early this fall. More of you need to receive that much needed recognition.

I am looking forward to attending some of your summer conferences and visiting with each of you. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any service to you or your state. Right now I'm hustling to get students to finish up those final projects, put a roof on that new greenhouse storage building and get the semester tests graded.

I hope you have the best summer ever!

Kevin Fochs, Region I Vice President

Region IV

Summer break is upon us and hopefully each of you had a successful year. As we take time to reflect on the previous year, hopefully the wins outnumbered the losses. Successful coaches spend a lot of time breaking down game films in order to understand what went right and what didn't. This same approach can help us improve our own programs and lives by helping us to identify our strengths and weaknesses.

Sports teams hit the weight rooms and have camps during their off-season to prepare for the next year. Working on fundamentals and building strength helps improve a team's chances of having a successful season. By participating in meetings, classes and other professional development activities, we can use our off-season to better ourselves and programs.

All great teams have an outstanding group of supporters. Cheerleaders, fans, news reporters and others help build the excitement to spur on team success. Coaching staffs spend a great deal of time building this base. One example of this can be seen in the meeting that our new football coach recently had to build support for a new acceleration program that the players are using to prepare for next year. I've also read numerous sports articles and heard many radio interviews of our local sports teams. As agriculturists, we also have the benefit of numerous supporters who have the voice and financial means to help our programs be successful. Summer is a great time for us to cultivate these relationships in our communities.

As you enjoy your time away from the classroom, please take advantage of this time to reflect on the past year, prepare for the coming year and build your fan base for a championship season next year.

Harold Eckler, Region IV Vice-President

Region II

Greetings from Region II! By the time that you read this, we will have held another successful Region II meeting in New Mexico. I know all of the hard work it takes to pull one of these together and I want to thank our hosts from the NMAETA for all of their efforts to make us feel welcome and to help us learn more about agriculture and agricultural education in their state. Thanks again for all you have done!

Speaking of the Region II meeting, it's not too early to mark it on your calendar - next year's Region II summer meeting will be in Pittsburg, KS, June 17-20, 2007.

For me, summer switches to a schedule with a different focus - it is a time to think about the past year, what worked and what didn't, to work on professional development, and to start working on things that will make for a smooth transition into the next school year. I am proud to be a teacher of agriculture and so many things this year reminded me of why I got into the business in the first place.

So many times Americans are criticized for focusing on the short-term rather than the long-term picture. As you reflect on last year and look forward to the next, I urge you to look at what you are doing for your students and your profession. Who will be the next generation of teachers? Are you selecting some of your best and brightest and carrying them for success as an agricultural science instructor? Don't focus so much on the short term that we lose sight of the big picture!

Dr. Bill Hunter, Region II Vice President

Region V

Well the final bell has sounded ending another school year. For most teachers it signifies the beginning of a two month vacation, but for us it seems as if we just catch another gear and race into yet another busy summer. However, please take time to restore yourself for next year, by spending a bit of time relaxing with family and friends.

I understand that most of you are spending the summer attending FFA convention and leadership conferences, making SAE visits, and attending all those teacher workshops and in-services, all in preparation to make 2006-07 better and more successful for your agriculture programs. We all see the importance of doing the important things to advance agriculture education and the FFA for our students. Likewise, it is important for us to take the time to expand and improve our professional organization. Summer is the time to take a more active leadership role in our organization or to encourage others to step up and take a larger role. We all understand the importance of membership. As the time approaches for dues renewal, the organization needs your help, to seek your fellow teachers who are not members and impress upon them the importance of membership. You have considerable influence over your fellow teachers; the time is now to exert that influence. Let's increase the voice of our organization by increasing membership. Membership is our shared responsibility.

Make your plans to attend the 2006 NAAE National Convention in Atlanta, GA. The deadline for early bird registration is open until July 14th. I know Georgia is working hard to make this the best convention yet and on behalf of all of Region V we welcome all to the South.

Hope you have a great summer. See you in Atlanta!

Ray Nash, Region V Vice-President

Region III

Can you believe it? School's out! The question that comes to my mind is what are you doing this summer. Many of us will be busy fulfilling our summer contract visiting students and organizing FFA activities in the community. In addition to our professional duties, I would like to encourage everyone to take some time for family activities. Why not take them on a memorable trip to Iowa, June 19-21? Yes, Region III will be hosted by our fellow Aggies from Iowa. The agenda is full of fun, fellowship, and of course professional development. I would like to thank Clyde Johnson and the gang from Iowa for all their blood, sweat, and tears in preparing for the Region III conference in Estherville. Below you will find my top 10 reasons for attending.

Top Ten Reasons to Attend Region III this June.

10. It's almost like a vacation.
9. Is this Heaven? No, it's Iowa.
8. You get to visit with Jay Jackman.
7. Traveling with your family.
6. Traveling with your friends.
5. Conduct NAAE business.
4. The Region III Ag Olympics.
3. Professional Development.
2. I have to attend because I'm a state officer.
1. You want to rekindle that burning desire to become a great teacher.

Don't forget to bring your state winning applications for judging at Region III. Remember to register for NAAE Convention in Atlanta this fall. Take time to develop yourself professionally and personally by attending your summer and regional conferences and spending quality time with your family.

Thomas Hofmann, Region III Vice-President

Region VI

We have all seen the bumper sticker that reads, "The best things about teaching - June, July, and August." Here it is June and I am thinking about the great things that are going to happen. School is out and we are getting ready for State FFA Convention. I am also planning Summer Leadership Workshops to get a jump on the 2006-2007 school year with prospective FFA members, attending State and Regional Ag Teacher Conferences to help me get recharged, with a little family time mixed in. If you are a racing fan, consider these months a time to take some pit stops for yourselves to make sure that we are excited and ready when students return in August. Most importantly, it's a time for each of us to prop up our feet, take a vacation, or simply spend time with our families and relax.

As we spend quality time this summer working in our profession, make the most out of attending summer conferences. One of my favorite things to do at a conference is to network with other ag teachers as we share our ideas and learn different techniques that may work in my department. I look forward to networking with other teachers at the Region VI Conference in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, June 27-30. Thanks to Judith Bruns and Heather Hastings for taking on the task of showcasing agriculture and education in Delaware.

Make plans now to attend the NAAE Convention, Nov. 28 - Dec. 1 in Atlanta, GA. Check out the NAAE website for more information. May you enjoy many pit stops this summer to get your battery recharged for the 2006-2007 school year. After all, we do make a difference.

Sally Shomo, Region VI Vice-President



Washington Beat

Wm. Jay Jackman

Some very positive things have happened recently for career and technical education (CTE), including agricultural education, recently on

Capitol Hill. First, the U.S. House of Representatives approved a federal budget resolution that restored funding for Perkins programs. Second, the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (often called the House Labor H subcommittee) has marked-up its bill for FY 2007 restoring level funding over FY 2006 levels for Perkins programs. Third, we are getting strong signals from the U. S. House of Representatives Education and The Workforce Committee that the House and Senate are getting ready to conference on the Perkins reauthorization. Both of these events signal very good news for CTE and ag ed. Isn't it about time we had some good news to share?

During the early morning hours of May 18, 2006, the U.S. House of Representatives approved its version of a congressional budget resolution after the Republican leadership

Good News From Capital Hill...

agreed to provide an additional \$3 billion for labor, health, and education programs, thus restoring funding for Perkins programs. The Senate passed its version of the federal budget on March 16, 2006. The Senate's budget resolution also restored funding. The House and Senate actions to restore funding for Perkins programs went against the recommendations of the President in his FY 2007 executive budget proposal. You can go to the NAAE Legislative Action Center to see how your elected officials voted on these bills. The budget measure should now move to a House-Senate conference; however, differences on the overall spending cap between the two resolutions are likely to make a final agreement difficult, if not impossible, to reach. As passed, the House version maintains President Bush's overall spending cap of \$873 billion, whereas the Senate version exceeds Bush's maximum spending level by at least \$16 billion.

In spite of the difficulties in getting a final federal budget resolution for FY 2007, the appropriations subcommittees have begun their work toward agreeing to funding for specific programs, such as Perkins, for next year. On June 7, 2006, the U. S. House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommit-

tee on Labor, HHS, and Education marked-up its spending bill for FY 2007. Contrary to the President's recommendations, the bill restores funding for Perkins programs at the FY 2006 levels. Even though we would like to have an increase in Perkins funding, in this day and time, level funding is welcomed and appreciated. The full House Appropriations committee is expected to take up

...in this day and time, level funding is welcome and appreciated.

the Labor HHS Education spending bill very soon (perhaps it'll be done by the time you read this) and it is anticipated the full committee will accept the subcommittee's recommendations on Perkins programs. The U. S. Senate will likely take up their appropriations bills in July 2006.

I'm quite sure many of you are tired of us talking about the Perkins reauthorization! (We're tired of working on it too!) Fortunately, all indications are that the House and Senate are moving forward very soon on the conference committee to work out the differences in the House and Senate Perkins reauthorization bills. It will be such a relief to get the Perkins reauthorization behind us. However, we'll still have to do battle each and every year for Perkins appropriations. So, keep your advocacy hats on!

FFA Washington Leadership Conference

We are so very pleased that the National FFA Organization has made advocacy a key component of the 2006 Washington Leadership Conference (WLC) program. All of the FFA members who attend WLC will be shown a new video that highlights key strategies for making an advocacy visit with a decision maker. After viewing the video and receiving instruction from the WLC staff, the FFA members visit Capitol Hill, hear from current members of Congress, and then proceed to their own Congressional visits. What a tremendous civics lesson for the students ... and what great benefit this can

have by informing members of Congress of the good things that are happening in school-based agricultural education throughout the United States.

In addition to the student program, the agricultural educators who accompany their students to WLC are enjoying a comprehensive advisors program, which also highlights advocacy. NAAE Advocacy Intern, Franklin Davis, an ag ed graduate from Clemson University, and a current graduate student in public policy at the University of South Carolina, is working with the WLC Advisors

Program this summer. Keri Haars, ACTE Advocacy Manager, will be assisting Franklin as well. Franklin and Keri will visit with the agricultural educators about the importance of advocacy at the local, state, and national levels, present advocacy tools to the educators, and provide the most current updates on federal legislation related to ag ed and CTE.

NAAE is most appreciative of National FFA for their choice to make advocacy a key theme during WLC for the students and for the teachers. This is a true example of *Team Ag Ed* at work.



Illinois Agricultural Educator Larry Littlefield, members of his FFA chapter, and Jay Jackman, NAAE Executive Director, meet outside the Longworth House Office Building on Capitol Hill.



Franklin Davis, NAAE Advocacy Intern, addresses the WLC Advisors Program.



Keri Haars, ACTE Advocacy Manager, presents at the WLC Advisors Program.

Agricultural Educators Take to Washington, D.C. at the 2006 National Policy Seminar

By: Kathryn R. Ellis

The voice of agricultural educators and NAAE members across the country continues to grow as we take an active role in the legislative process. The 2006 ACTE National Policy Seminar held in March further empowered agricultural educators to share the aged story with their respective communities and legislators.

While attending the conference, NAAE members were able to take a proactive role in the legislative process, learned about current research and initiatives in the industry, attended issues briefings, and made legislative visits to Capital Hill. Key messages for NPS included the need for opposition for the reduction in overall funding for education, employee training and social services through Functions 500 and 550 in the federal budget process. To more effectively meet the needs and challenges facing our nation, Perkins funding needs to be increased to \$1.675 billion. At minimum, Perkins needs to gain reauthorization. In the midst of Perkins reauthorization, the career and technical education community must join together in advocacy.

Beto Gonzalez, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Office of Vocational and Adult Education in the U.S. Department of Education, spoke about the importance of empowering students to obtain an education that reflects and responds to the rapidly changing and developing U.S. economy. "There is still a place in the American educational

system for vocational education" said Gonzalez. By incorporating higher academic levels and vigor into vocational education programs, we will help move it forward for future generations.

Agricultural education also plays a tremendous role in the workforce. Eric Steiner, staff member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry and agricultural education graduate from Purdue University, examined the valuable connection between supervised agricultural experiences and the community. "One of the many ways a teacher can position components of agricultural education in high school is as an incubator for small businesses," said Steiner. With the teacher in the role of facilitator, students involved in supervised agricultural experience programs are often able to learn from the best leaders in the community as to how to make a business succeed and grow. Students see the importance of business planning, keeping accurate records, and

the need for interaction with other sectors of the business community. Through real-life experiences, students are able to become more knowledgeable employees and business leaders. This interaction with the business sector contributes to the economic infrastructure of the community and continues to develop as other small start-ups are implemented.

Within agricultural education programs, there is a need to showcase the percentage of students that pursue higher degrees. By comparing the percentage of students in your school system that go on to colleges or technical schools with the percentage of students out of your program that pursue higher levels of education, the contributions to the community by these individuals can be more thoroughly evaluated. As agricultural educators, there is also a need to showcase individuals who have gone through our programs and are working in high paying careers.

As agricultural educators, we need to share the impact of our programs with individuals in positions of power.

There is a need for a statewide, locally run effort to contact legislators to market agricultural education. By developing personal relationships with those working in government, we are able to showcase the

importance of our program and the high return on public investment generated by continued funding. Use these personal relationships to extend invitations for involvement with your FFA chapters. The aged story is told through active involvement on the local level.

As agricultural educators there is a need to share the impact of our programs with individuals in positions of power...



NAAE members Paul Larson (left) and Linda Burton (right) of Wisconsin met with Representative Thomas Petri on their Capital Hill visit.



NAAE President-Elect, Lee James (left) and President Allan Sulser (right) met with The Council during NPS.



NAAE Region VI Vice-President Sally Shomo met with Nick Chadkewicz, Sr. Legislative Assistant, from Congressman Goodlatte's Office in the 6th District of Virginia.

Steiner Emphasizes the Need for Developing Relationships Between Agricultural Educators and Legislators

By: Kathryn R. Ellis



Eric Steiner spoke with NAAE members at the 2006 NPS.

Eric Steiner, professional staff member of the U. S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, discussed potential opportunities for agricultural

educators across the country to do just a little bit more to pursue grassroots initiatives at the 2006 Association of Career and Technical Education National Policy Seminar (ACTE NPS). Steiner led the NAAE Ag Ed Breakout at this year's NPS, held in Washington DC, March 6-8, 2006.

The session began when Steiner, himself an agricultural education graduate from Purdue University, asked attendees to rise to their feet and had them stretch one arm behind them. After a few seconds, Steiner asked the audience to stretch just a little bit more, and of course everyone could. This theme of stretching oneself a little bit further was a familiar thread throughout the discussion.

Steiner emphasized the importance of grassroots initiatives in terms of the advancement of agricultural education as Perkins is up for reauthorization. The fight for reauthorization comes amidst President Bush's 2006 budget request to eliminate Perkins and shift its \$1.3 billion in funding to his proposed high school reform initiative. However, Congress continues to maintain support for Perkins.

The Presidential and Legislative roles vary in terms of Perkins reauthorization. Steiner had the audience envision an analogy of a stagecoach pulled by horses. In this scenario, the President holds the reigns of the stagecoach which direct the "horses," various governmental departments including the Department of Agriculture and Department of Education. The role of Congress is complementary and necessary, in that all preventative maintenance and water for the horses is provided in the form of authorizing legislation and funding.

When examining proposed budgets for funding and program cuts, it is important to keep in mind that Congress doesn't always follow the President's recommendations. Steiner emphasized the importance of talking to your elected officials on all levels of government, especially your U.S. Representatives and Senators, about the need for Perkins reauthorization. We each hold incredible influence, especially if everyone does their fair share, and the effort it actually takes for each one of us is minimal — "just a little bit more."

"The more you can communicate with Members from your actual states, the more effective you may be," said Steiner. As agricultural educators, it is important that we communicate our story, demonstrating the effectiveness of our programs.

"When we think of marketing the total agricultural education program, when teaching agri-business courses especially, one of the most important components is positioning. When you tell your ag ed story, you are marketing the opportunities you already provide our nation's youth," said Steiner.

The achievements of youth testify to the value of the program; however, there is a need for comprehensive data detailing the achievements of agricultural education. Highlighting the math and science applications involved in today's agricultural education are key points.

As an agricultural educator you can showcase the percentage of students who go on to complete post-secondary degrees. By comparing the percentage of students in your school system that go on to colleges or technical schools with the percentage of students out of your program that go on and pursue higher levels of education, the contributions to the community by these individuals can become more relevant to decision makers. One way to contribute to this effort is to invite a few students to undertake the effort as a research project within your own school.

"One of the many ways a teacher can position components of agricultural education in high school is as an incuba-

tor for small businesses," said Steiner. Our elected officials are aware that a large share of economic growth in our country originates from small start-ups. With the teacher in the role of facilitator, students involved in supervised agricultural experience programs are often able to learn from the best leaders in the community as to how to make a business succeed and grow. Students learn the importance of business planning, keeping

accurate records, and the need for interaction with other sectors of the business community. This mentor-mentee relationship contributes to the economic vitality

of the local community. Students gain real life experiences that make for better employees and better future employees.

As agricultural educators, we need to share the impact of our programs with individuals in positions of influence. There is a need for a statewide, locally run effort to contact legislators to market agricultural education. By developing personal relationships with those working in government, we are able to share the importance of our program and the high return on public investment generated by continued funding. Use these personal relationships to extend invitations for involvement with your FFA chapters. The Ag Ed story is told through active involvement on the local level.

When making contacts with elected officials, it is important to remember that your message needs to be well-written, well-directed, and well-spoken. Remember, our elected officials are responsible for appropriating the funding for agricultural education. A kind word or a thank you note from teachers, individual students, alumni, friends, sponsors, and elected officials from the local community can go a long way. In an age in which many programs are experiencing funding reductions, it is critical that the impact that agricultural education makes on students lives and consequently, the community, is recognized by our legislators.

"When we think of marketing the total agricultural education program, when teaching agri-business courses especially, one of the most important components is positioning. When you tell your ag ed story, you are marketing the opportunities you already provide our nation's youth," said Steiner.

2006 NAAE/ACTE Ag Ed Division Covention

The 2006 NAAE Convention being held in conjunction with ACTE Convention will be November 28-December 2 in Atlanta, Georgia. Both schedules are being carefully planned to ensure that NAAE members will have access to both NAAE and ACTE sessions. NAAE members will pay one registration fee and have full access to both conventions.

All registration fees for the NAAE and ACTE conventions will be processed by ACTE.

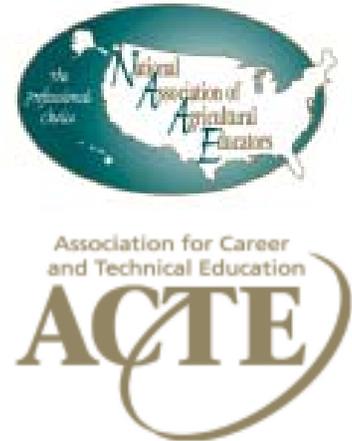
IMPORTANT: It is imperative that you select "Agricultural Education (AGR)/NAAE" on "Part A—Field of Specialization" of the registration form. ACTE will pay the NAAE convention registration fee to NAAE for all registrants who check "Agricultural Education (AGR)/NAAE" on Part A of the registration form.

USDA SPEC GRANT PROJECT DIRECTORS MEETING PARTICIPANTS: It is imperative that you select "Other" on "Part A—Field of Specialization" of the

registration form and enter the word "USDA" in the "Please specify" box. This is the way we will be able to identify you as a participant in the USDA SPEC Grant Project Directors Meeting and ACTE will pay the NAAE convention registration fee to NAAE for all who register in this manner.

Register Online: You may register for the conventions now by going to <http://www.naae.org/convention/registration/> and linking to the ACTE Convention Registration Website. When you go to the ACTE Registration page, you will be asked to login. If you already have an existing login with ACTE, please enter that information. If you do not have login information with ACTE, scroll down to "Sign up as a new user" and enter your contact information. After you have received an email from ACTE, you will be able to log into the system and complete registration. *By registering online you will be eligible for a discount off of the registration fee.*

The NAAE Convention Hotel will be the **Hilton Atlanta** and room rates will be \$132 per night for single or double occupancy rooms, plus applicable taxes. Please visit the NAAE website at <http://www.naae.org/convention/housing/> for information regarding reservations.



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2006 NAAE/ACTE Ag Ed Division Convention Schedule Draft

November 28-December 2, 2006

Atlanta, GA

Tuesday, November 28

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 7:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. | NAAE Board of Directors Meeting |
| 12:00–7:00 p.m. | NAAE Convention Registration |
| 2:00–5:30 p.m. | NAAE Teachers Turn the Key Professional Development Sessions I & II (by invitation only) |
| 6:00–8:30 p.m. | NAAE Award Dinners (Outstanding Middle/Secondary School Program, Outstanding Postsecondary/Adult Program, and Outstanding Teacher – by invitation only) |

Wednesday, November 29

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|-----------------------|--|
| 7:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. | NAAE Convention Registration |
| 7:30–8:00 a.m. | NAAE Continental Breakfast |
| 8:00–9:00 a.m. | NAAE/ACTE Ag Ed Division General Session I (<i>Featuring Outstanding Teacher, Outstanding Middle/Secondary school Program, and Outstanding Postsecondary/Adult Program Awards</i>) |
| 8:00–9:00 a.m. | NAAE Spouses' Meet-and-Greet |
| 9:00–12:00 | NAAE Spouses Event (to be determined) |
| 9:15–10:45 a.m. | NAAE Regional Meetings I (six separate break-outs – one for each NAAE region) |
| 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. | NAAE Committee Meetings I (seven separate break-outs – one for each NAAE standing committee) |
| 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. | NAAE Teachers Turn the Key Professional Development Session III (by invitation only) |
| 12:00–1:30 p.m. | NAAE State Presidents' Luncheon (by invitation only) |
| 1:30–4:30 p.m. | NAAE Professional Development Workshops |
| 2:00–4:30 p.m. | NAAE Teachers Turn the Key Professional Development Session IV (by invitation only) |
| 5:00–6:00 p.m. | NAAE/ACTE Ag Ed Division General Session II (<i>Featuring Outstanding Young Member Awards</i>) |
| 6:00–7:00 p.m. | NAAE John Deere Reception (in honor of the Outstanding Young Members) |
| 7:00–9:30 p.m. | NAAE Outstanding Young Member Award Dinner (by invitation only) |

Thursday, November 30

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|-----------------------|---|
| 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. | NAAE Convention Registration |
| 8:30–10:30 a.m. | ACTE Opening General Session |
| 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m. | ACTE Career Tech Expo (dedicated time to network with exhibitors) |
| 1:00–4:00 p.m. | ACTE Professional Development Breakout Sessions (Mega Issues–Legislation, Advocacy, etc.–and Exhibitor Workshops) |
| 5:00–6:00 p.m. | NAAE Committee Meetings II |
| 6:00–7:30 p.m. | ACTE President's Reception |
| 7:00–9:00 p.m. | NAAE Host State Social |

Friday, December 1

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. | NAAE Convention Registration |
| 8:30–9:30 a.m. | ACTE General Session |
| 10:15–11:15 a.m. | NAAE Regional Meetings II |
| 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. | NAAE/ACTE Ag Ed Division Luncheon (<i>Featuring Lifetime Achievement, Outstanding Cooperation, and Outstanding Service Awards</i>) |
| 1:30–4:30 p.m. | NAAE Optional Off-site Tours (tickets sold in advance) |
| 5:00–7:00 p.m. | NAAE Organizational Members and Partners Reception (<i>Featuring Ideas Unlimited exhibits</i>) |

Saturday, December 2

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. | NAAE Convention Registration |
| 8:30–9:30 a.m. | ACTE General Session |
| 10:00–11:15 a.m. | NAAE Professional Development Breakout Sessions |
| 12:00–2:30 p.m. | NAAE/ACTE Ag Ed Division General Session III and Business Sessions (<i>Featuring Teacher Mentor, Ideas Unlimited Awards, and Teachers Turn the Key Awards; NAAE Officer Elections</i>) |
| 3:00–4:00 p.m. | NAAE Board of Directors Meeting |
| 4:30–6:00 p.m. | ACTE Assembly of Delegates |
| 7:30–10:30 p.m. | ACTE Wrap Party |

NOTE: This is a **draft** of the convention schedule. The schedule is subject to change.

Please check the NAAE website, <http://www.naae.org>, for the most current convention schedule information.

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News & Views

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Dates & Events

NAAE Region II Meeting — June 18-21, 2006 – Farmington, New Mexico

NAAE Region V Meeting — June 19-22, 2006 – Chattonooga, Tennessee

NAAE Region III Meeting — June 19-23, 2006 – Estherville, Iowa

NAAE Region IV Meeting — June 26-28, 2006 – Jackson, Missouri

NAAE Region VI Meeting — June 27-30, 2006 – Rehoboth, Delaware

NAAE and ACTE Conventions — November 28 - December 2, 2006 — Atlanta, Georgia

NAAE Legislative Action Center

Keep up to date with legislative alerts and contact your elected officials! Let your members of Congress know about the accomplishments of your local agricultural education program through the

NAAE Legislative Action Center.

Visit the NAAE website at <http://www.naae.org/advocacy/legactioncenter/> for details.